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THREE HOURS;
OR,
THE VIGIL OF LOVE:
AND
OTHER POEMS.

BY

LV
MRS. SARAH JOSEPHA HALE, ✓
AUTHOR OF "NORTHWOOD," "TRAITS OF AMERICAN LIFE,"
ETC., ETC.

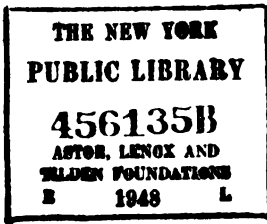
~~~~~  
"Love? I will tell thee what it is to love:—  
It is to build with human thoughts a shrine,  
Where Hope sits brooding, like a beauteous dove;—  
Where Time seems young, and Life a thing divine."  
~~~~~

PHILADELPHIA:
CAREY AND HART.

1848.

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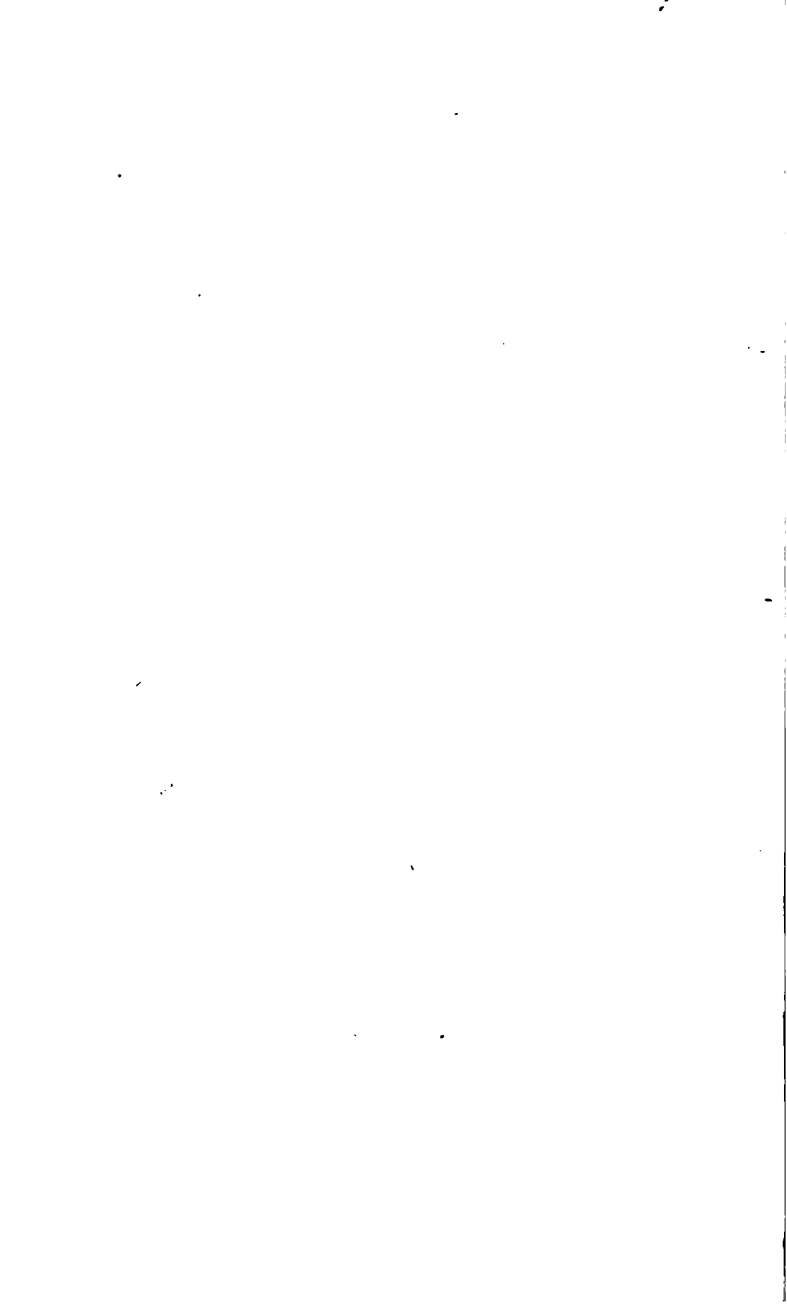
Entered, according to the Act of Congress, in the year 1847, by

S A R A H J. H A L E,

In the clerk's office of the District Court of the United States for the Eastern
District of Pennsylvania.

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TO
THE READERS
OF
THE LADY'S BOOK,
OF WHICH, FOR TEN YEARS, I HAVE BEEN EDITOR,
AS TO MY VERY DEAR FRIENDS,
THESE POEMS
Are Affectionately Inscribed
BY
THE AUTHOR.



P R E F A C E.



It is often said that poetry is not of much account in this practical age. Yet the young always love poetry; and America is the land of youth and hope. The truth is, that besides having easy access to all the literature of past ages, so many poetical works attract and divide the attention, that no one writer, either ancient or modern, receives the homage of old offered to the Bards. Still, there are many, many readers of poetry, and warm admirers of the "art divine," and the writer of these Legends feels assured her friends—the whole world of the Lady's Book—will give this little work a cordial reception. Some of the shorter poems will be familiar to them; but the volume will be mostly new to the public.

(vii)

As an attempt to impart poetical interest to the ordinary events of woman's life, and show glimpses of domestic character connected with early American history, the author believes the larger poems, particularly the first, will be found to possess originality of design. This first poem was never before printed, the last never published, though a small edition was issued for a charitable purpose. In preparing these Legends, the author has scrupulously sought to devote whatever talents she may possess to the grandest purpose of the true Bard :—

—————"For amid all life's quests,
There seems but worthy one—'t is to do good."

NOVEMBER, 1847.

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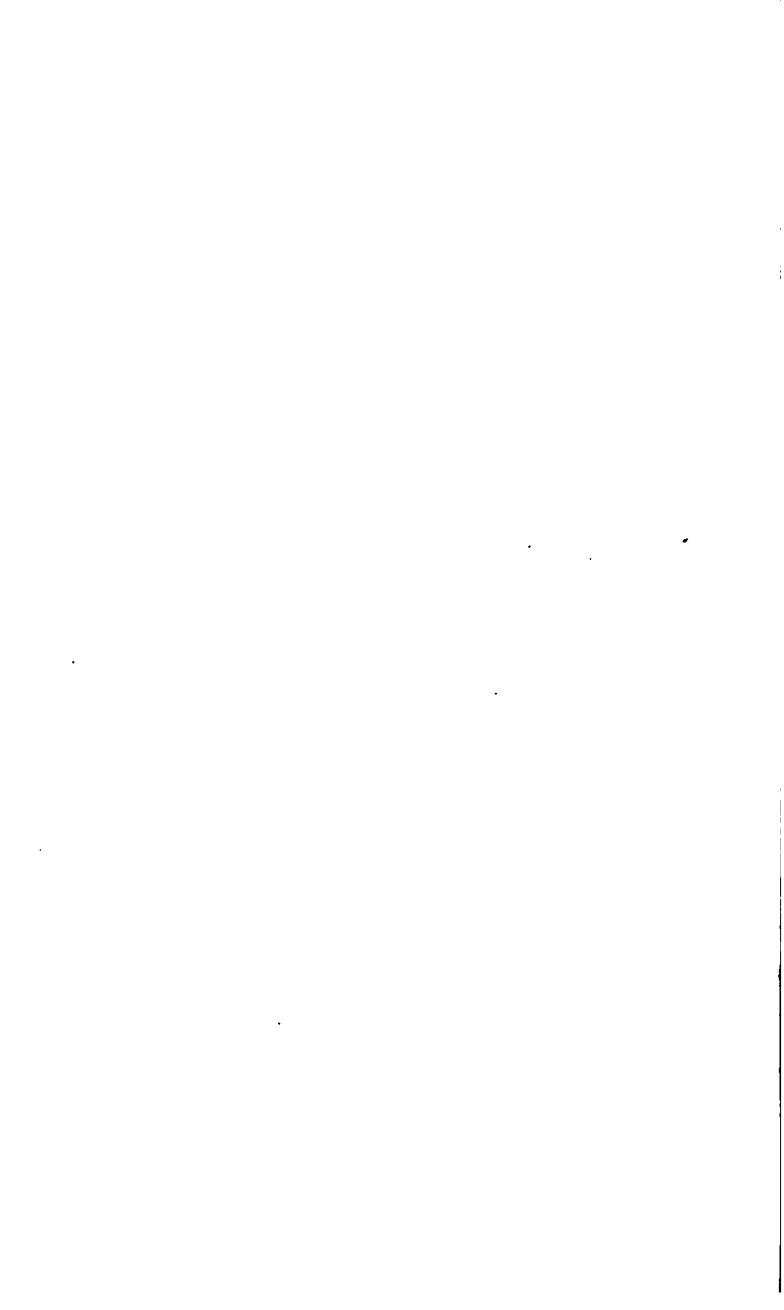
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THREE HOURS;
OR,
THE VIGIL OF LOVE.



They sin who tell us Love can die,
With Life all other passions fly;
All others are but vanity.
Its holy flame forever burneth;
From heaven it came, to heaven returneth.

SOUTHEY.



THREE HOURS;
OR
THE VIGIL OF LOVE.

FIRST HOUR.

1.

MANY, many years ago,
When the months moved very slow,
Keeping time with minds of men,—
Human thought was slumbering then:
Long ago a Cottage stood
Where God's Temple rises now,
And there frowned a sullen wood
On a bleak Hill's shaggy brow,
Just above the humble dwelling:—
'T is no fairy Tale I'm telling,

But a History of the heart,
When nature triumphed over art.
The scenery then was wild and strange,
But time and man have wrought a change.
As Thought can use the lightning's wings,
A single season often brings
Such plans of power and deeds of fame
As centuries past could never claim.
The shaggy Hill is smiling now,
Like warrior who has won the day,
And on its green, uplifted brow
The palace of a State holds sway ;
And yet, like hopes that never die,
Beneath the Pile, our gaze that wins,
Roots of the sere, old forest lie
That flourished ere my Tale begins.

2.

"Nine o'clock !" — it strikes the hour,
Not the clock of the lofty tower, —

Many a conquering year must go,
 Bearing its banner of bloom and blight,
Gathering its spoils of joy and wo,
 Ere stands the Church on the Cottage site!
“Nine o’clock — he is not here —
I cannot check this creeping fear,
That thrills my heart at Time’s death-tone,
— It strikes so loud when I’m all alone!”

She raised her eyes to the old brass clock,
Whose calm face seemed her fears to mock;
It stood in pride so stiff and tall,
As though it propped the Cottage wall,
And to and fro swung its pendulum ball.

3.

We feel there is a God above
When seeing tokens of His love, —
That angels there must be on high
When human beauty meets our eye.

And oh! how angel lovely seemed
The Lady of that Cottage home,—
It was as though some Bard had dreamed
A radiant star-nymph on him beamed,
And when he woke had found her come!

4.

As easy 't were the nymph to bind
As tell the charm the Lady bore;
True beauty never was defined—
And features painted to the mind
Are perfect only to the blind
Who never scan the image o'er.—
Oh! very beautiful was she,
A loveliness most rare to see.
Her eyes were like th' ethereal hue
From Chimborazo's skyward view,
When stars begin to tremble through,
And not a vapor dims the blue;—

And clustering curls of soft, blond hair,
Around her throat and shoulders flow
Like morning light on mountain snow,—
And face so delicately fair!
'T was like a lily newly blown,
Or, like breathing Parian stone,
Softened by a heart within,
Sending love-light through the skin!
Ay, the soul's transparent vase
Seemed that pure, pale, loving face.

5.

Kneeling by a cradle-bed,
On the clock she gazed in awe,—
Turning thence, her fears seemed fled
When her sleeping boy she saw;
And her beauty caught new grace,
As she smiled, a trusting smile,
Sad forebodings had given place,
Hope, like new-fledged dove, the while,

Nestled in her mother's breast
As she watched her infant's rest.

6.

“Better, ay, he'll soon be well—
Saviour-God, I bless thy name!”
Silvery sweet her accents fell,—
From her heart the blessing came.
Then she rose and gently raised
The pine-knots on the hearth that blazed;
Beneath her touch they burn so bright
Every shadow seems to flee:—
The bed's blue damask canopy,
And a tall, carved chair of ebony,
Stiff as knight in armor dight,
Were strongly painted in the light;—
And strangely mingling with them, stood,
Like humble friends, the bench of wood,
And table, shaped with axe and saw—
On which a silver flagon shone,—

None of these her notice draw;
The Lady's gaze is turned alone
On a rude shelf filled with books;
Or, as listening for his moan,
On her sleeping boy she looks.

7.

A blessing on the printer's art !
Books are the Mentors of the heart.
The burning soul, the burdened mind,
In books alone companions find.
We never speak our deepest feelings;
Our holiest hopes have no revealings,
Save in the gleams that light the face,
Or fancies that the pen may trace :
And hence to books the heart must turn,
When with unspoken thoughts we yearn ;
And gather from the silent page
The just reproof, the counsel sage,
The consolation kind and true

That soothes and heals the wounded heart,
As on the broken plant the dew
Calls forth fresh leaves and buds to view,
More lovely as the old depart.

8.

And when, with gloomy fears oppressed,
The trembling-hearted fain would rest,
No opiate like a book, that charms,
By its deep spell, the mind's alarms ;
Opening, as Genius has the key,
Some haunt of mirth, or mystery,
Or trusting faith, or tender love,
As vista to the heaven above,
Where the lone wandering one may come,
Refreshed and glad, as though at home ;
And feel the soul has wells of joy,
Like springs that gush in cavern's gloom,
And hopes like gold without alloy,
Or diamonds buried in a tomb.

9.

But there's a fever of the soul,
Beyond this opiate control;
When the book-charm its influence loses,
The mind will wander where it chooses:
We see the page, but never heed,
Or thought is busy while we read;
And strange revealings fill the gloom—
A song of joy, or dirge of doom
Seems writ on every page we turn,
With spirit lore we fain would learn.

10.

Even thus she sat in reverie,
An open book upon her knee,
That Lady pale, while far away
Her thoughts, like truant children, stray.
Her heart—no, not her heart—went back,
'Twas memory trod the long, dim track.

On, on, like beam of light she sped,
Or thought that flies to seek the dead;
On, over the ocean's wintry foam,
Where surges heave as mountains high,
As 'twere to join the sea and sky;
And now the blesséd land is nigh—

And she has reached her childhood's home!
She sees the grand ancestral Hall,
The pictured warriors on the wall,—
There frowns a grim old ancestor,
As might have scowled the Saxon Knight,
Who perished in the fatal fight
That made Duke William "Conqueror!"

Then came a Lady, very fair,
Even in her faded semblance there,
Companioned by a stern, dark Knight,—
Like morning shrinking back from night—
And told, like page of History,
The Talbot's genealogy;—

Told, too, how stern the sires had been—
 Their harsh and haughty Norman blood;
While gentler flowed the stream within
 The Saxon daughters, fair and good.
And she, the lovely dreamer there,
Like marble form in the tall, dark chair,
She was the last Lord Talbot's heir!

11.

Grace Talbot! in her pride of place
She had been called the Lady Grace.
And since her gentle mother died,—
 The daughter then was only seven—
She had been taught to foster pride,
As though high birth might be allied,
 Or rather was, to rank in heaven!
Her stern, cold father loved her not,
And often murmured at the lot
That gave no son to swell the fame
And honors of the Talbot name.

But as his bud became a flower,
His selfish soul was gratified;
He saw her wondrous beauty's power
Would be the prop to raise his pride—
As vine the bending tree sustains,
And with its foliage hides the stains—
And she should wed, to please her sire,
A noble duke with vast estate;
Ah! her destiny was higher,
Far, far above the worldly great.

12.

'Tis well there are some minds on earth
That bear the impress of the skies,
Hearts that seem hallowed from their birth,
A pure and willing sacrifice
To lure the loving angels near
Our low abode of sin and fear,
And show the soul a title clear

To hope for immortality,
By proving what the good can be.
'T is well for us that such a soul
Will 'scape the snare of earth's control;
That wealth, and rank, and pride in vain
Attempt o'er such a heart to reign.
And when a gentle being bears
 This sweetest seal of woman's mind,
The virtues like a garland wears,
 And makes her very pleasures kind,—
Then, with the lapsing years that steal
 The loveliness of youth away,
Will come the graces that reveal
 The angel in the form of clay.

13.

And thus the gentle Grace seemed come,
Like dove, that wandered from its home
In heaven, the olive-leaf to bring,
And harbinger the human spring;

When love shall bloom without a thorn,
And peace descend like April showers,
And hopes of bliss that gild youth's morn
Grow brightest in life's evening hours.

14.

They met — the lovely Lady Grace
And Sydney Morton met!
A scion he of the strong-souled race
Whose Bible was their Amulet;
A model of the heaven-taught man
That rose in the ranks of the Puritan!
Bold in the cause of God he stood,
Like Templar in the Holy Land;
And never Knight of princely blood
In lady's bower more bland.
His high, broad forehead, marble fair,
Told of the power of Thought within;
And strength was in his raven hair,—
But when he smiled a spell was there

That more than power or strength could win.
And to the loved and good his eye,
'That glowed with purpose firm and high,
Was mild as light when storms go by :
— But when it flashed his spirit's might
Against the foes of truth and right,
'T was like the bolt from cloud of night !

15.

They met — the lovely Lady Grace
And Sydney Morton met,
As kindred stars will find their place
Within a cluster set.
They met and loved, as such hearts would,
They loved the true, the pure, the good
That each could in the other see ;
They loved the charms that last for ever —
And vain it were such hearts to sever,
— True love is for eternity.

16.

The history of their truthful love,
And all that served their faith to prove,
And all the trials that befell —
These were a tale o'er long to tell.
'T is sad to think, beneath the sun,
What deeds of darkness have been done!
What multitudes have pined and died
Through human prejudice and pride!
What prison secrets will be told
When the last Record is unrolled!
God's Record of the sins of men —
Oh! where will flee the guilty then?
Thanks be to God, one Land is free
From deeds of blood iniquity!
The "bannered stars" have never shed
Their glory o'er a victim's head;
Nor drop of blood has flowed to dower
The fabric of the Union's power!

17.

But to our Tale — we may not here
Its strange and sudden turns make clear ;
How deep within a dungeon chained

Morton was sentenced to the block,
And but one day of life remained,

When he was told, as if to mock
His sorrows, that his day of death
Would be Grace Talbot's bridal day !
(Her haughty sire had thus decreed
His pride and vengeance both to feed ;)
Ah ! well he used his parting breath,

For when the hours had passed away,
His cell and chains were found alone—
Prisoner and keeper both were gone !
And she went, too, his Grace, his wife,
His all of wealth, his more than life,
She fled with Morton over the sea—
Such was their love's sharp history.

18.

Her cottage home the sequel tells—

They reached the green Peninsula,
Where the Tri-Mountain sentinels
Looked over the broad Bay!

O glorious scene of Land and Sea!
There Morton felt that he was free;
And in his consecrating prayer,

When to the New-World's hope and faith
He pledged his race for life and death,
Besought his God, with earnest zeal,
As Moses for his brethren's weal,

That Freedom's birth-place might be **THERE**:
Her light go forth, till o'er the earth
All nations hailed its place of birth;
And Boston should become to them
As Liberty's Jerusalem!

SECOND HOUR.

1.

MANY, many years ago,
When all the world moved very slow ;
Before the light of Science broke,
Or Freedom's eagle glance awoke,
Many a fantasy was rife,
Linked with the mystery of life :—
Portents strange were on the air,
 Shadowing forth the wrath of heaven ;
And prodigies were everywhere,
 For an humbler warning given.
Dreams and omens came to all,
And held the strongest minds in thrall ;
And even the wisest wore the chain,
Forged by these phantoms of the brain.

2.

“Ten o'clock!”—it strikes the hour—
On her knees the Lady bows;
She believes her prayers have power
To keep the foul fiend from the house;
So when young her mother told her,—
Few there be can change when older
Creeds received in childhood's days—
The girl believed—the woman prays.

3.

It was the story of a Knight,
Prisoner in a haunted castle,
Where, from eve till morning light,
Evil spirits held their wassail;
He was pious, and his prayer
Kept the demon from his bed,—
But he heard it everywhere—
Heard its whisper, heard its tread;

Sometimes, with a stealthy brushing,
Like a cat it crept around ;
Sometimes like a strong wing's rushing
Came the heart-appalling sound ; —
Sometimes underneath his feet,
Like a slimy serpent twining, —
Once he turned his foe to meet,
And saw its eyes like hot coals shining, —
But it vanished with a growl,
Short and fierce like stifled howl !

Then the mother told her child,
While she listened, wonder wild, —
How at length the Knight was taught,
By an angel from above,
That if he would fix his thought,
In a prayer of faith and love,
At the close of every hour,
Till the clock had ceased its sound,

Never a demon would have the power

Even to enter the castle's bound.

"And," her mother said, "he breathed the
prayer,

And never again was the demon there.

So, Grace, would you conquer the Evil power,

Be sure and pray at each passing hour."

4.

Such strange wild tales, with withering blight,

Came over her mind this long, lone night ;

And as she prayed, and the clock struck ten,

It seemed to echo her low "Amen !"

Its last vibration thrilled her ear,

As some sweet, soothing whisper near, —

She thought — "My husband will be here !

Even now, perchance, he's almost home —

I'll open the window and see him come :"

The door was barred where the Indian trod,

And she opened the shutter and looked abroad.

5.

It was an early autumn night,
The moon should be above the trees;
But gathering clouds obscured the light,
And heavy from the neighbouring seas
The ghost-like mist in masses crept,
As though to crush the rising breeze,
And shroud the dying plants it wept.
And cold and clammy was the mist,
As its lips the Lady kissed,
While she leaned far out to see
What a moving shape might be!
“Ah!” — she sighed — “it is not he!”
’T was a bush that shook in the rising blast,
As the wind, in strength, came rushing past —
Tearing the mist, and tossing it high,
The foam of night, in the face of the sky,
Till the stars were veiled by the rolling rack,
And her hope in heaven seemed beaten back!

6.

She drew within, the shutter closed,
And wished her child would wake ;
And yet so sound the boy reposed,
It seemed a sin to break
His slumbers — “ Ah ! he has no fear —
His guardian angel must be near, —
And like a child I, too, will trust ;”
As she spoke a furious gust
Tore open the shutter, and trampled the room,
Howling around like a voice of doom,
And left its breath of chill and gloom !

7.

Then came another mournful tale,
Syllabled by the wind's deep wail
Like words, to her awakened thought, —
How a cruel King was brought
Into an abbey to 'scape his doom ;
The fiend could n't enter the holy room, —

The door was blessed by a fasting friar —
The hearth was red with a palm-wood fire ; —
But the window was weak, and the fiend burst in,
As bursts a storm — with dreadful din !
The cruel King he breathed his last
Ere the storm was o'er, or the window fast.

8.

And while such fearful visions rose,
Loud and louder the tempest blows !
It shook the door with a strong man's might,
—She thought she heard her husband there—
The sound, it died in the arms of night,
And all was still as grave-yards are !
She rose to unbar the cottage door,
But paused until the gust was o'er, —
Her husband's voice was heard no more.
And tears gushed as she turned away,
By her lone hearth to watch and pray.

9.

Then a fierce crash shook the roof,
Like a giant's arm descending,—
Heart of man would scarce be proof
To the danger thus impending:
Craunching on, it seemed to tear
Downward to the cottage eaves—
Then leaped madly through the air,
Scattering wide the fallen leaves!

10.

Upward gazed the Lady pale,—
And then another awful tale,
By unhallowed witchcraft wrought,
So freshly to her mind was brought,
— A story in her childhood heard,
When she believed it every word—
The wierd-like drama seemed to rise
Even then before her straining eyes!

Or as our morning visions pass,
Or figures o'er a magic glass,
So came that old, unearthly tale,
— No marvel she was deathly pale.

11.

Once a holy man was set
Watching where the witches met !
Open Bible, naked sword,—
And three candles on the board,—
There the godly man was set
Watching where the witches met ;
Knowing well his dreadful doom,
Should they drive him from the room.

The candles three were burning bright,
The sword was flashing back the light,
As it struck the deep midnight ;
While the holy Book he read,
And all was still as are the dead.

.

Suddenly there came a roar
Like breakers on a rocky shore,
When the ocean's thundering boom
Knells the mariner to his tomb!
The good man felt the struggling strife,
As the ship went down with its load of life!
His seat was shaken by the roar,
And upward seemed to rise the floor!
While round and round, as eddies hurl,
The room and table seemed to whirl!
Yet still the holy Book read he,
And prayed for those who sail the sea.

Then came a shrieking, wild and high,
As when flames are bursting nigh,
And their blood has stained the sky!
"Fly! fly! fly!" in a strangling cry,
Was hoarsely rattled on his ear—
While the crackling flames came near!

And still the holy Book read he,
And prayed for those where fires might be.

And then appeared a sight of dread ;
The roof was opened above his head—
He saw, in the far-off, dusky view,
A bloody hand—and an arm—come through !
The Lady seemed to see them too.

Downward, pointing towards his head,
That long, bare arm, and hand blood-red,
Came slowly, like a thought of dread !

The Lady seemed to see them come—
That arm of might, and hand of doom—
Slowly coming !—coming !—come !

Ah, the sword is in his hand !
Man of God, be valiant now ;
In the name of Jesus, stand—
Strike ! strike the blow !

'T is done;—the chill of death came o'er her,
The bloody hand seems rolled before her!

12.

We may smile, or coldly sneer,
The while such ghostly tales we hear;
And marvel why they were believed,
And how wise men could be deceived:—
—Bathing our renovated sight
In the free Gospel's glorious light,
We wonder it was ever night!
'T is Christian Science makes our day,
And Freedom lends her gladdening ray;
And we forget, 'neath our fair skies,
The world that yet in shadow lies;—
That India bows to Juggernaut;
And China worships gods of clay;
And healing amulets are bought,
Even where our Saviour's body lay;

And holy miracles are wrought,
Beneath St. Peter's cross-crowned sway;
And over Afric's wide domain
The powers of Death and Darkness reign!

13.

Then marvel not, while thus was brought
Tales long believed, to her lone thought,
The Lady's heart was faint with fear —
That twice she thought the fiend was near,
And pressed so close he shook her chair —
She started — looked — and nothing there!
And twice she seemed to hear a sigh

As when the soul and body part, —
And then a chilling breath stole by
That checked the pulses of her heart,
And froze the current of her blood —
While on her brow the cold pearls stood.
— How could she gain the strength and power
To bear her through this long, lone Hour?
She cast her burden on the Lord;
She trusted and believed the Word:

The Bible in her hand she kept,
And watched her infant as he slept;
“And oh! my son,” she firmly said,
“Never shall such tales of dread
Be told to you as I have heard, —
And never shall your soul be stirred,
While faith is warm, and reason slow,
With scenes of fear and thoughts of wo; —
I will teach you God is love,
And then such blessed hopes instil,
That, through life, your joy ’t will prove
To read His word, and do His will.”

14.

And thus when Freedom’s advent came,
Brave souls appeared to hail her light;
The mothers — they had lit the flame
That gave the People hope and might;
For trust in God must ever be
The Power that makes and keeps man free!

THIRD HOUR.

1.

It was two hundred years ago,
When moved the world so very slow,
And when the wide Atlantic Sea
Appeared like an eternity :—
Few who crossed it e'er returned,—
'Twas then the Pilgrim fathers earned,
And not alone by faith and prayers,
Homes and graves for them and theirs.
Stern the struggle, sharp the strife,
 Many a pilgrim hero died ;
There was many a childless wife ;
 Many a widowed bride,—
Many a first-born, sleeping child
 Awakened by the war-whoop yell,—
Midnight flames, and ravage wild,
 Before the savage tribes they quell.

2.

"Eleven o'clock!"—it strikes the hour,
The Lady feels the spell of power,—
Her latest vigil is begun;
And she, like the night-blooming flower,
Looks loveliest in the darkest hour—
Oh! would her watch were done.

3.

"Eleven o'clock!—Ah! wo is me,
The murdering sachem may be near,—
I must not dream such misery,—
Oh, heaven will bring my husband here!
I will not weep"—and then she wept,
And closer to the cradle crept;
There she was not all alone,
Her boy still slept in heavy rest,
And to his cheek her lips she pressed;
Hot and dry his cheek had grown,
And his breath came short like a stifled moan.

4.

As she upraised her pallid face
From that long, sweet, but sad embrace,
The candle in the socket fell,
 Flickered a moment, and then died !
How dark it left her none can tell—
 She had but one beside.
She watched the slowly smouldering brands,
And closely clasped her quivering hands—
“I shall not be forsaken quite,”
She murmured—“God will give me light.”
The fire flashed up, even as she spoke,
The flash her little Sydney woke,
And as he lisped his mother’s name,
What joyous rapture thrilled her frame !
And sweet as Spring her answer came.

5.

And now the candle, ’t was her last,
 She lighted that her child might see ;

Her gloomy fears and cares were past,

Her smile was glad as smile could be;
That taper shone to her as bright
As does to us a Drummond light!

She placed it where her boy would view,
And watched his large, black, lustrous eyes,
While he looked up in grave surprise,

As children woke from sleep will do.
— On her son, while thus she gazes,
Thought a kindred likeness raises;
And by the blush of love that came

And made her cheeks like summer roses;
And by her blue eye's kindling flame,

That the heart's warm throb discloses, —
And by the tear on her eye-lash brim,
She thinks of his father, while gazing on him.

6.

“Water, water, mother, pray!”

Said the boy, in pleading tone;

Ere his hot, parched lips could say

The words, her feet had flown.

Who shall picture her despair?

Not a drop of water there!

In the vessel, where 't was kept,

Was a fissure small;

While she watched, and prayed, and wept,

It had vanished all.

Drop by drop it stole away,

Like minutes from the shrinking day,

While all unmarked their silent flow —

They are gone is all we know.

The gliding sand will leave the glass,—

But who has ever heard it pass?

7.

The lesson, rightly read, will show

The vanishing hope of things below.

How prone are men to garner up
Their life-draught in a single cup,—
Keeping their treasure in vessel of clay,
Till drop by drop it filters away.
And then, when thirsting, they must die,
Or do battle, hard and high
With dark thoughts that come like clouds
When the storm the night enshrouds ; —
With wild wishes that like winds
Shake Hope's flower-seeds from our minds ;
— Hopes are nursed 'neath sunny skies,
Passions on life's storms arise, —
And while their earthward burnings reign
The thirsty soul will seek in vain
For living waters, — draughts from heaven
Are only to the heaven-ward given.

8.

— Constant blessings, common things,
From these how many a pleasure springs !

Take from us water, air, or light,
The world would be but Death and Night !
Would aught survive this night and death ?
Ay, Woman's love, and Woman's faith.
Even now that loving Mother's eye,
 The while her great loss she could trace,
Was calm as summer waters lie
Whene'er they would entice the sky,
 And stoop the stars to their embrace.

9.

There was water, cool and clear,
 The gushing Spring the Lady knew ; —
A sober Pond was sleeping near,
 And tall, old trees their shadows threw
Around the green turf margin fair, —
 Where you may see them any day ;
The Turf, the Trees, the Pond are there, —
 The Spring has oozed away.

10.

Ah ! pale she was, that Mother mild,
As tenderly she kissed her child ; —
Placing the pillows to raise his head,
She propped him up in his cradle bed,
And gazed in his eyes with such tender love
As the Saviour may feel for his children above ;
— And murmured — “ Sydney will lie still,
And watch and see the candle burn,
While mother goes ? and she ’ll return.”
— Calmly the boy replied — “ I will.”
She knew that she might trust his word,
For, like young Samuel, to the Lord,
Even from his birth, had he been given,
And pure as cherubs are in heaven,
And truthful in his every thought
Was he, for thus he had been taught.

11.

She took the flagon to depart,
And yet her feet were loath to move ;

A tremor shook her boding heart—

But oh! the depth, the might of love!—

It can strengthen or subdue,—

It gave her power her task to do;

“The Saviour guard thee, precious one!”

Was the word to the child, and the mother is
gone.

She drew the door with close, firm grasp,

Fastening its latch with a curious clasp,

A clasp that closed like a padlock true,

And she and one other could only undo.

12.

And then she paused—though not in dread,

Her supernatural fears had fled;

The Mother's heart had broke their chain,

And freed her from the phantom's reign.

But other dangers might be met—

The Indian might her steps beset;

The path was long and lone by day—

Now darkness seemed to hedge the way;

And never in the night before
Had she stood alone without her door.
And so she paused and strained her sight,
But only saw the robe of night.
The warring winds had sunk to rest,
Like weary men with fight oppressed.
She listened with a quickened ear
That her heart's throbbing pulse could hear;
In vain—the earth seemed listening too;
But only heard the falling dew,
 That came as still as heavenly grace,
Known only as it makes us blest,
 And as we leave its holy trace
In blessings to a neighbor's breast:
And silent blessings are the best.

13.

The lowly Cottage-home was placed
Where then was all a lonely waste;
For Morton, always first to come
 At duty's call or danger's frown,

Had chosen there to fix his home,
Without the limits of the town,
Then to the narrow streets confined
That nearest to the water lay :
Around Fort Hill the dwellings wind,
And cluster near the open Bay ;—
And *westward* then as now was heard
Like herald summons to be gone ;
An undefined and wandering word,—
Its common import—*further on*.
And *westward* then had Morton gone
To draw the settlers *further on*.

14.

And who would credit, standing there,
Where now the stately mansions rise,
And Temple turrets stud the air,
Painting their tall heads on the skies,
And “merchant princes” throng the way,
And Fashion flaunts her rich array,—

That there, two hundred years ago,
 Lowly and lone one Cottage rose ?
Like plant that could in desert grow,
Or hermit holding men as foes ;—
For not a dwelling was in sight ;
Above it was the bleak Hill's height,
And sweeping down the old trees stood —
The north was all a thick, dark wood,
Shadowing the lowly Cottage eaves,
And raining there the Autumn leaves.
— 'T is peopled now by silent men,
And graves are thick as trees were then.
There sleep the parents of the Sage
 Who beckoned lightning from the sky,
And left his impress on an age —
 The Franklin, who will never die.

And while those garden-graves you see,
Where shrub has ta'en the place of tree ;

The holy, shadowed resting-place,
Where garnered lies the precious dust
Of those who led the Pilgrim race,
And stamped their motto—"Try and Trust!"
— Then think how strong the Soul can be —
And through what perils Men have trod,
Who held one purpose — to be free ;
One faith — the Bible faith in God.

15.

This faith sustained the Lady's soul ;
As there in loneliness she stood,
A tranquil trusting o'er her stole, —
God could protect her, and he would.
And though the East was coffin black,
And not a star sent down its ray,
Yet she could keep the narrow track
She knew so well by day, —
An Indian trail that reached the Spring ;
And surely not a living thing

Would haunt the path on such a night ; —
And yet her step was very light.
Camilla's footing scarce could pass
More lightly o'er the feathery grass ;
Cornelia's soul was not more true —
The Lady had her jewel too ;
Her son's sweet face seemed ever present,
— For his dear sake the toil was pleasant :
Thus God upholds the mother's love,
And aids her from His strength above.

16.

On, on she sped like arrow true,
One hope to buoy, one goal in view, —
When sudden, on her quickened ear,
A sound, a rustling noise comes near !
She listens — 't is the playful breeze
Creeping amid the tall, dark trees ;
And then, a welcome sight I ween,
She saw the Old Elm's crown of green,

The Patriarch of the sylvan scene.
And still that forest Patriarch stands ;
And though its aged arms decay,
The heart is sound as it was the day
It welcomed the Pilgrim Bands.
Oh ! guard it well, that brave old Tree,
Where first our Eagle shook his wings,
Till from the heaving Sunset Sea,
And Rio Grande, flowing free,
The Union-Olive-Branch he brings.

17.

And friend of mine, whoe'er thou art,
The Author's friend, or friend in heart,
Remember, shouldst thou ever be
Shadowed beneath that old Elm Tree,—
While visions of the Past float by,
As 't were between the mind and eye,
Fair forms, and never seen, perchance,
Save by Imagination's glance ;—

To her the Peri power is given,
Roving o'er earth, to rest in heaven,
And there such glorious scenes behold
As tongue nor pen have never told !
Ay, feeble as the sun's eclipse
To represent his noon-tide ray,
Would be the language of the lips
These heavenly visions to portray.
But such high raptures rarely come
'Mid heart-warm thoughts of friends and home ;
Then dream, among thy fancies free,
The Spring was gushing near that Tree,
Its waters pure as loves of home,
And thither had the Lady come.

18.

She filled her flagon, and homeward flies
Like wind-driven cloud across the skies ;
Fast and faster her hurrying feet,
Quick and quicker her heart's wild beat ;

While an echo strangely hollow
On her footsteps seemed to follow !
Not Mother-Earth's short, sobbing speeches,
As when the coffin-lid she reaches—
But her tone, low, muffled, dull,
As when a grave is nearly full !
And yet the sky above was clearer—
The Lady felt that God was near her ;
And then her heart was warm with prayer,
— Oh ! her home—she's almost there.

19.

Horror ! what has she espied ?
The Cottage door is open wide !
And see, a shadow dark and tall
Is rising to the ceiling wall !
It lifts its grisly hand to mock !—
Its finger points to the old brass clock !
It is the fiend—there was none to pray—
The hour has struck, and she away !

20.

For a moment fixed she stood,
Paralyzed in every limb ;
Curdling at her heart the blood,
And her straining eye-balls dim ;
Then, like heaven's electric flame,
Love's reviving current came :
Her soul seemed, like a new-strung bow,
Strong for the struggle with evil or wo,
As she rushed with a cry, like the plover wild,
Over the threshold, " My child ! my child ! "

21.

Morton clasps her to his breast
And kisses all her tears away ;
And oh, how fervently they pray !
How sweet and soothing is their rest,
While Grace recounts her heart's alarms,
Safe sheltered in her husband's arms !

And Morton feels 't is blest to live
While such dear shelter he can give ;
And that in blessing he is blest,
While on her faith his heart can rest ;
That home to fallen man was given
To keep alive his hope in heaven ;
And that the truth of future bliss,
 Of happiness in worlds above,
Is proven when we show in this
 That Earth can be a Heaven of love.

NOTES

TO

THREE HOURS, ETC.

NOTE 1. Page 14.

Not the clock of the lofty tower.

Park Street Church. The tower of this church is the loftiest in the city of Boston. The localities alluded to in the Poem are all easily traced from this point, where the Cottage then stood on the present site of Park Street Church.

NOTE 2. Page 23.

She was the last Lord Talbot's heir.

Many, indeed most of the Pilgrim Fathers were from families of high respectability in their own country; and there were some from among the best nobility of England. Such was Lady Arabella Johnson, daughter of the proud Earl of Lincoln. Mr. Johnson and his wife, the Lady Arabella, were among the early emigrants to Massachusetts. She died and was buried at Salem, then the capital of the Colony; but he lived several

years after, and was one of the leaders and most efficient pioneers in the settlement of the city of Boston. He, too, belonged to a rich and ancient family, and was connected with others of high rank.

NOTE 3. Page 28.

*The "battered stars" have never shed
Their glory o'er a victim's head.*

It should be a matter of grateful thanks as well as of proud triumph to every American, that the Government of the United States, and also the separate Governments of all the States, have been organized and carried into effect without the shedding of a drop of blood,—without a single instance of violence. These Governments have been sustained, and the Laws everywhere upheld by the People without any armed force; and there has never been a proved traitor, or an execution for political offences. Contrast this picture with that of the best Government in the Old World—with Great Britain. How many "traitors" have there been discovered! The noblest blood of England has been poured out on the scaffold! What dreadful tortures, what awful punishments have been inflicted on political offenders! And now a large armed force is there required to keep the people in subjection to the Laws. Well may Americans thank God for their good Government and their favoured lot.

NOTE 4. Page 47.

She had but one beside.

The peculiar difficulties and sufferings of the early Colonists cannot now be realized. It was not the lack of means but of merchandise. There was money, but no market—nearer than London; and the Atlantic could not then be crossed in ten days; it sometimes took as many months. We were told by an old lady of Boston, a lineal descendant of one of the early Governors, that her grandmother told her often she had but one pound of candles during six months. "And," said the wise lady of the Governor, "I was never out of candles during the whole time." Such was the true Yankee spirit—always remembering there will come a to-morrow.

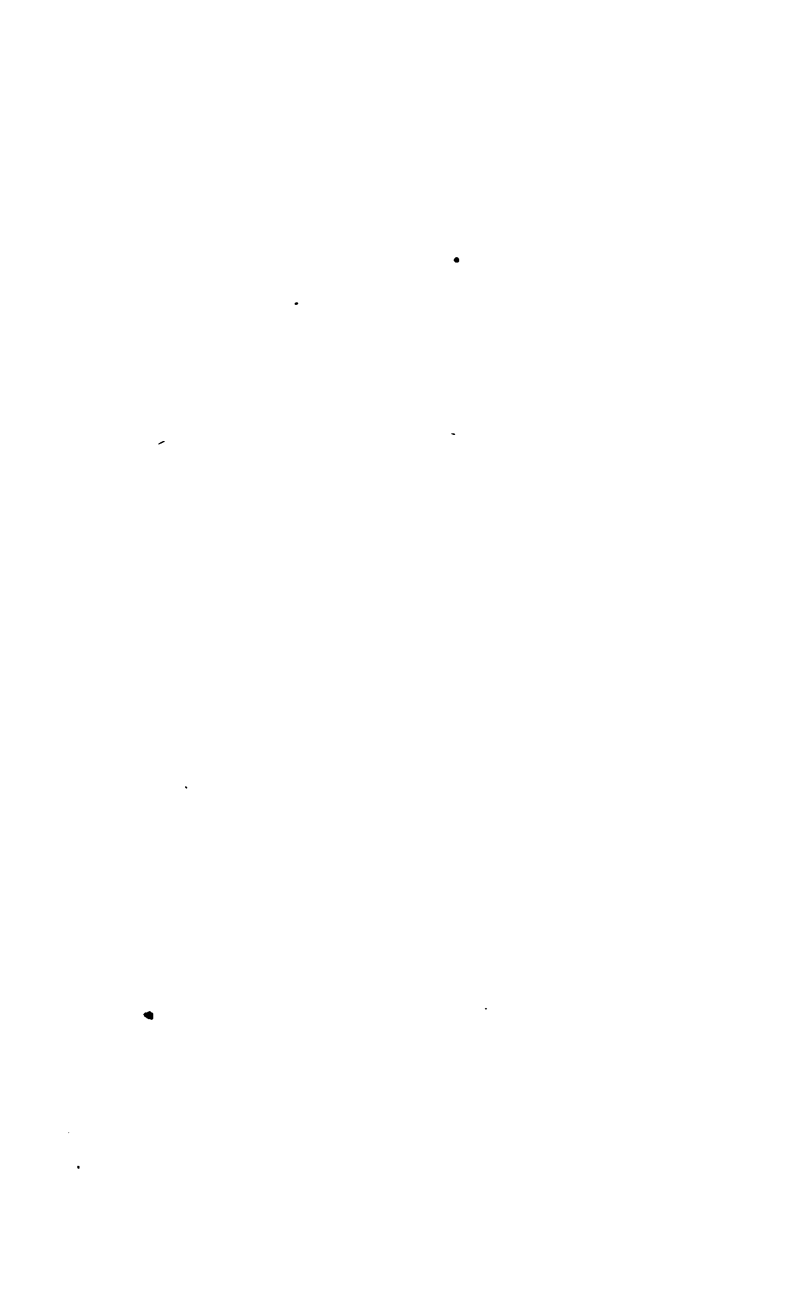
PART II.

P O E M S.



The world is full of glorious likenesses,
The poet's power is to sort these out,
And to make music from the common strings
With which the world is strung.

FESTUS.



P O E M S.



IRON.

"Truth shall spring out of the earth."—PSALMS, LXXXV. 11.

As, in lonely thought, I pondered
On the marv'lous things of earth,
And, in fancy's dreaming, wondered
At their beauty, power, and worth,
Came, like words of prayer, the feeling—
Oh! that God would make me know,
Through the spirit's clear revealing—
What, of all his works below,
Is to man a boon the greatest,
Brightening on from age to age,
Serving truest, earliest, latest,
Through the world's long pilgrimage.

Soon vast mountains rose before me,
Shaggy, desolate and lone,
Their scarred heads were threat'ning o'er me,
Their dark shadows round me thrown;
Then a voice, from out the mountains,
As an earthquake shook the ground,
And like frightened fawns the fountains,
Leaping, fled before the sound;
And the Anak oaks bowed lowly,
Quivering, aspen-like, with fear—
While the deep response came slowly,
Or it must have crushed mine ear!

“Iron! Iron! Iron!”—crashing,
Like the battle-axe and shield;
Or the sword on helmet clashing,
Through a bloody battle-field:
“Iron! Iron! Iron!”—rolling,
Like the far-off cannon's boom;

Or the death-knell, slowly tolling,
Through a dungeon's charnel gloom!
"Iron! Iron! Iron!"—swinging,
Like the summer winds at play;
Or as bells of Time were ringing
In the blest Millennial Day!

Then the clouds of ancient fable
Cleared away before mine eyes;
Truth could tread a footing stable
O'er the gulf of mysteries!
Words, the prophet bards had uttered,
Signs, the oracle foretold,
Spells, the weird-like Sibyl muttered,
Through the twilight days of old,
Rightly read, beneath the splendor,
Shining now on history's page,
All their faithful witness render—
All portend a better age.

Sisyphus, for ever toiling,
Was the type of toiling men,
While the stone of power, recoiling,
Crushed them back to earth again !
Stern Prometheus, bound and bleeding,
Imaged man in mental chain,
While the vultures, on him feeding,
Were the passions' vengeful reign ;
Still a ray of mercy tarried
On the cloud, a white-winged dove,
For this mystic faith had married
Vulcan to the Queen of Love !

Rugged strength and radiant beauty—
These were one in nature's plan ;
Humble toil and heavenward duty—
These will form the perfect man !
Darkly was this doctrine taught us
By the gods of heathendom ;

But the living light was brought us,
When the gospel morn had come !
How the glorious change, expected,
Could be wrought, was then made free ;
Of the earthly, when perfected,
Rugged Iron forms the key !

“ Truth from out the earth shall flourish,”
This the Word of God makes known,—
Thence are harvests men to nourish—
There let Iron’s power be shown.
Of the swords, from slaughter gory,
Ploughshares forge to break the soil ;—
Then will Mind attain its glory,
Then will Labor reap the spoil,—
Error cease the soul to wilder,
Crime be checked by simple good,
As the little coral builder
Forces back the furious flood.

While our faith in good grows stronger,
Means of greater good increase ;
Iron, slave of war no longer,
Leads the onward march of peace ;
Still new modes of service-finding,
Ocean, earth, and air it moves,
And the distant nations binding,
Like the kindred tie it proves ;
With its Atlas-shoulder sharing
Loads of human toil and care ;
On its wing of lightning bearing
Thought's swift mission through the air !

As the rivers, farthest flowing,
In the highest hills have birth ;
As the banyan, broadest growing,
Oftenest bows its head to earth,—
So the noblest minds press onward,
Channels far of good to trace ;

So the largest hearts bend downward,
Circling all the human race;
Thus, by Iron's aid, pursuing
Through the earth their plans of love,
Men our Father's will are doing,
Here, as angels do above!

PRIZE POEM.*

SPIRIT of Memory,

Thou that hast garnered up the joys and tears,
And all the human spoil of buried years,

We bow to thee!

O, lift thy veil, and bid the Past appear!

'T is gathering, slowly gathering on my sight:
Those dark old woods, where Death and Night

Held their companionship, were here;

Here, where the Muses' temple stands,
Rung the fierce yell of savage bands;

And, save that withering cry,
Or glimpse of savage warrior's flight,
Like the red meteor's flashing light,

That meets, yet mocks the eye—

* Written for the Second Centennial Anniversary of the Settlement of Boston. Spoken at the Tremont Theatre, Sept. 17, 1830.

Save these, the waters and the wood
Stretched in unbroken solitude ;—
Lone, fearful, desolate and sad the scene,
For here the Dove of Peace had never been,
Brooding o'er human hearts, till hope was given,
And the rude child of earth became the glorious
 heir of heaven !

A sail ! a sail ! o'er yonder wave
A freighted bark is sweeping on !
Land of the learned, the proud, the brave,
Mourn'st thou no treasure gone ?
Thou Island-Empire — forth from thee,
Like Wisdom from the Thunderer's brow,
Sprung the bright form of Liberty ;
And high-souled men have joined her train,
Nor fagot's blaze, nor dungeon's chain,
 Can their firm purpose bow ;—
They would have held the guarded pass,
Or shared thy doom, Leonidas,

Had *faith* and *duty* cheered them on :

They come ! that Pilgrim Band — they come !

This lone land is their chosen home,

And this broad world is won !

These were our Fathers — men of souls sublime,

Whose deeds are graven on the scroll of Time,

And there, while mind shall struggle to be free,

Or truth teach wisdom, will the record be.

Slowly, as spreads the green of earth

O'er the receding ocean's bed —

Dim as the distant stars come forth —

Uncertain as a vision fled

Has been the Old World's toiling race,

Ere she could give a nation place.

Come hither ye who countless ages scan,

Searching the doubtful course of social man,

Come, learn that Freedom mocks Time's slow

career,

Seizes his hoard and showers his treasures here ;

But spurns his errors, hallowed e'er so long
By seer or sage, in sermon or in song :
And ye who would the deathless spirit bind,
Come hither, and its unshorn strength be taught ;
Nor, till ye calm the wave and curb the wind,
Prescribe a limit to the realm of thought !

•

THE
CHASE OF PLEASURE.

WE all are children in our strife to seize
Each petty pleasure, as it lures the sight:
And like the tall tree, swaying in the breeze,
Our lofty wishes stoop their towering flight,
Till, when the aim is won, it seems no more
Than gathered shell from ocean's countless store.

Or, like the boy, whose eager hand is raised
To seize the shining fly that folds its wings,
We grasp the pleasure, and then stand amazed
To find how small the real good it brings!
The joy is in the chase — so finds the boy —
When seized, then he must loose it, or destroy.

And yet the child will have enjoyment true,
The sweet and simple pleasure of success;

He reasons not, as older minds would do,
How he shall show the world his happiness :
And, wiser than the crowds who seek display,
His own glad earnest purpose makes him gay.

And ever those who would enjoyment gain
Must find it in the purpose they pursue ;
The sting of falsehood loses half its pain
If our own soul bear witness — we are true !
What matter though the scorn of fools be given,
If the path followed lead us on to heaven !

STANZAS
TO THE MEMORY OF L. E. L.

[Written immediately after reading the confirmation of the rumor that Miss Maclean, better known as Miss Landon, had died at Cape Town, Africa.]

AND thou art gone ! the Bridal Rose
Fresh on thy laurelled head ;
A land of new, wild, wondrous scenes
Before thy fancy spread—
Song on thy lip.—It may not be ;—
I scarce believe thee dead !

“Bring flowers, pale flowers !”—But who for thee
An offering meet can bring ?
Who paint thy Muse, like Huma* bright,
For ever on the wing ?
Or catch the tones that thrilled the soul,
Poured from thy Lyre’s sweet string ?

* Huma — a bird of the East, which the natives say never rests, as it is only seen flying.

They say thy heart's warm buds of hope
Had never felt a blight;
That 'mid gay throngs, in brilliant halls,
Thy step was ever light,
At gatherings round the social hearth
None wore a smile more bright.

And yet, upon thy world of song,
Dark shadows always sleep;
The beings by thy fancy formed,
Seem only born to weep,—
Why did thy Soul's sweet fountains pour
A tide of grief so deep?

Was the prophetic shadow cast
By Afric's land of gloom;
That thus thy fancy ever linked
The poison with the bloom?
And 'mid the fairest bowers of bliss
Still reared the lonely tomb?

In vain we search for Thought's deep source,
Its mysteries none can tell;
We only know thy dreams were sad,
And so it has befell
That Love's bright wreath crowned thee for Death!
— Dark fate—and yet 't is well:—

Ay, well for thee; thy strength had failed
To bear the Exile's chain,
The weary, pining, homesick lot,
That withers heart and brain,—
And He, who framed thy soul's fine pulse,
In mercy spared the pain.

And while we mourn a Pleiad lost
From out Mind's lofty sky,
A Lyre unstrung, whose "charmed chords"
Breathed strains that ne'er can die,
Give us, O God, the faith that sees
The Spirit's Home on high.

Sweet Minstrel of the heart, farewell ;
How many grieve for thee !
What kings might ne'er command is thine,
Love's tribute from the Free :
The flowery earth, the starry sky,
The mourner's tear, the lover's sigh,
Enshrine thy memory.

And this is fame ! The glorious meed
Is thine beyond decay,
Landon will grace the Briton's lore
Till earth shall pass away ;
What India's wealth were poor to buy
Won by a Woman's lay !

THE

EMPIRE OF WOMAN.

1.

Woman's Empire defined.

THE outward World, for rugged Toil designed,
Where Evil from true Good the crown hath riven,
Has been to Man's dominion ever given;
But Woman's empire, holier, more refined,
Moulds, moves and sways the fall'n but God-breathed
mind,
Lifting the earth-crushed heart to hope and heaven:
As plants put forth to Summer's gentle wind,
And 'neath the sweet, soft light of starry even,
Those treasures which the tyrant Winter's sway
Could never wrest from Nature, — so the soul
Will Woman's sweet and gentle power obey —
Thus doth her summer smile its strength control;

Her love sow flowers along life's thorny way ;
Her star-bright faith lead up toward heaven's goal.

2.

The Daughter.

The iron cares that load and press men down
A father can, like school-boy tasks, lay by,
When gazing in his Daughter's loving eye,
Her soft arm like a spell around him thrown :
The passions that, like Upas' leaves, have grown
Most deadly in dark places, which defy
Earth, heaven and human will, even these were shown
All powerless to resist the pleading cry
Which pierced a savage but a father's ear,
And shook a soul where pity's pulse seemed dead ;
When Pocahontas, heeding not the fear
That daunted boldest warriors, laid her head
Beside the doomed ! Now with our country's fame,
Sweet forest* Daughter, we have blent thy name.

* See the splendid painting, "Baptism of Pocahontas," at the Capitol.

3.

The Sister.

Wild as a colt, o'er prairies bounding free,
The wakened spirit of the Boy doth spring,
Spurning the rein authority would fling,
And striving with his peers for mastery;
But in the household gathering let him see
His Sister's winning smile, and it will bring
A change o'er all his nature; patiently,
As caged bird, that never used its wing,
He turns him to the tasks that she doth share —
His better feelings kindle by her side —
Visions of angel beauty fill the air, —
And she may summon such to be his guide: —
Our Saviour listened to a Sister's prayer,
When, "Lazarus, from the tomb come forth!" he
cried.

4.

The Wife.

The Daughter from her father's bosom goes —
The Sister drops her brother's clasping hand —

For God himself ordained a holier band
Than kindred blood on human minds bestows :
That stronger, deeper, dearer tie she knows,
The heart-wed Wife ; as heaven by rainbow
spanned,
Thus bright with hope life's path before her glows —
Proves it like mirage on the desert's sand ?
Still in her soul the light divine remains —
And if her husband's strength be overborne
By sorrow, sickness, or the felon's chains, —
Such as by England's noblest son* were worn, —
Unheeding how her own poor heart is torn,
She, angel-like, his sinking soul sustains.

5.

The Mother.

Earth held no symbol, had no living sign
To image forth the Mother's deathless love ;

* Lord William Russell.

And so the tender care the righteous prove
Beneath the ever-watching eye divine,
Was given a type to show how pure a shrine,
The Mother's heart, was hallowed from above ;
And how her mortal hopes must intertwine
With hopes immortal, — and she may not move
From this high station which her Saviour sealed,
When in maternal arms he lay revealed.
Oh ! wondrous power, how little understood,
Entrusted to the Mother's mind alone,
To fashion genius, form the soul for good,
Inspire a West,* or train a Washington !

* "My mother's kiss made me a painter," was the testimony of this great artist.

THE ROSE

AT THE BIRTH-PLACE OF WASHINGTON.

BRIGHT Rose! what dost thou here, amid
 These sad mementoes of the past?
The crumbling stones thy roots have hid—
 The bramble's shade is o'er thee cast;
Yet still thy glowing beauty seems
Fair as young childhood's happy dreams.

The sunbeam, on the heaving surf,
 Proclaims the tempest's rage is o'er;
The violet, on the frozen turf,
 Breathes of the smiling spring once more:—
But, Rose, thy mission to the heart
Has not in things that change a part.

The moss-grown ruins wide are spread,
Scarce rescued from the trodden mass;
The time-scathed trees, whose branches dead
Lie, cumbering o'er the matted grass,—
These tell the tale of Life's brief day,
Hope, toil, enjoyment, death—decay!

The common record this of man,
We read, regret, and pass it by;
And rear the towers, that deck our span,
Above the grave where Nations lie;
And heroes, who like meteors shone,
Are like the meteor's flashings gone.

But, radiant Rose, thy beauty breaks
Like eve's first star upon the night,
A fairer hue the vision takes—
The ruins shine with heaven's clear light;
His *name*, who placed thy root in earth,
Has holy made thy place of birth.

Yet 't is not here his wreath we twine,
Not here that Freedom's Chief we praise;
The stars at rising softer shine,
Than when o'er night's dark vault they blaze;
Not here, with Washington's great name,
Blend his achievements or his fame.

But pure as star-light is the ray
Which rests on this deserted ground,
Here passed his childhood's happy day—
Here glory's bud meet culture found,—
Maternal smiles, and tears, and prayer,
These were its light, its dew, its air.

Bright Rose! for this thy flower has sprung,
The Mother's steadfast love to show;
Thy odor on the gale is flung,
As pours that love its lavish flow;
The Mother's lot with hope to cheer,
Type of her heart, thou bloomest here.

THE

FOUR-LEAVED CLOVER.

"There's wisdom in the grass, its teachings would we heed."

THERE knelt beneath the tulip tree
A maiden fair and young;
The flowers o'erhead bloomed gorgeously,
As though by rainbows flung,
And all around were daisies bright,
And pansies with their eyes of light —
Like gold the sun-kissed crocus shone,
With beauty's smiles the earth seemed strown,
And Love's warm incense filled the air,
While the fair girl was kneeling there.

In vain the flowers may woo around, —
Their charms she does not see,
For she a dearer prize has found
Beneath the tulip tree —

A little *four-leaved clover*, green
As robes that grace the fairy queen,
And fresh as hopes of early youth,
When life is love, and love is truth ;
— A talisman of constant love,
This humble clover sure will prove !

And on her heart, that gentle maid,
The severed leaves has pressed,
Which through the coming night's dark shade,
Beneath her cheek will rest ;
Then precious dreams of *one* will rise,
Like Love's own star in morning skies,
So sweetly bright, we would the day
His glowing chariot might delay ; —
What tomes of pure and tender thought
Those simple leaves to her have taught !

Of old, the sacred mistletoe
The Druid's altar bound ;

The Roman hero's haughty brow
The fadeless laurel crowned. —
Dark superstition's sway is past,
And war's red star is waning fast,
Nor mistletoe, nor laurel hold
The mystic language breathed of old;
For nature's life no power can give,
To bid the false and selfish live.

But still the olive-leaf imparts,
As when, dove-borne, at first, —
It taught heaven's lore to human hearts,
Its hope, and joy, and trust;
Nor deem the faith from folly springs,
Which innocent enjoyment brings —
Better from earth root every flower,
Than crush imagination's power,
In true and loving minds, to raise
An Eden for their coming days.

As on each rock, where plants can cling,
The sunshine will be shed ;
As from the tiniest star-lit spring,
The ocean's depths are fed ;
Thus hopes will rise, if love's clear ray
Keep warm and bright life's rock-strewn way ;
And from small, daily joys, distilled,
The heart's deep fount of peace is filled —
O! blest when Fancy's ray is given,
Like the ethereal spark, from heaven !

A THOUGHT IN WINTER.

Look forth! — 't is Winter's sullen sky,
Dark, stormy clouds are sweeping by,
And through the leafless branches high
 The tempest howls a dirge of death!
Why whispers Hope, amid the scene,
Of glowing suns, and skies serene,
And waters bright and woodlands green,
 And gales as soft as music's breath?

Look forth! — the heaving hills of snow,
Rent by the winds, whirl to and fro,
And downward, like an ocean flow,
 And bury garden, vale and grove!
Why dream that Spring, with bird-like song,
Will lead the flower-crowned Hours along,
And tread those frozen wastes among,
 In beauty, melody, and love?

O! there's a blessed sign, a word,
A feeling in the soul's soul stirred, —
In the wild tempest's war 't is heard, —
 It shines through midnight's starless gloom;
It tells us God is good — and we
Believe like children, trustingly,
And leaning on the promise, see
Through Winter's storm the radiant Summer
 bloom.

THE DEAD OAK.

Why should the forest monarch die?

In seeming strong and sound:—

Was there a blighting from the sky?

A worm beneath the ground?

The buds, those breathings of the Spring,

Like bubbles pass away;

And flowers, that Summer's smile can bring,

Must with her smile decay.

These yield their pleasures bright though brief,

And bud and flower may fall,

Yet fragment cup and tinted leaf

Their memory will recall.

The healing herb, the verdant grass,

Like household joys they come,

And leave a blessing, as they pass,
To cheer our winter home.

Not transient thus the Oak's proud form,
It rears its head on high,
And battles with the raging storm,
And braves the blazing sky!

A thousand years may o'er it roll—
States rise and cease to be;
Yet there's no record on Man's soul
To mark its history.

It stands alone, like despot's power,
And when its doom is wrought,
It leaves no bond, like bud or flower,
To link with tender thought.

And therefore does it mouldering lie,
Nor hope nor joy recall;
Bearing this lesson — pride must die,
And none will mourn its fall.

THE WATCHER.

1.

THE night was dark and fearful,
The blast swept wailing by ; —
A Watcher, pale and tearful,
Looked forth with anxious eye ;
How wistfully she gazes —
No gleam of morn is there !
And then her heart upraises
Its agony of prayer !

2.

Within that dwelling lonely,
Where want and darkness reign,
Her precious child, her only,
Lay moaning in his pain ;
And death alone can free him —
She feels that this must be :

“But oh! for morn to see him
Smile once again on me!”

3.

A hundred lights are glancing
In yonder mansion fair,
And merry feet are dancing —
They heed not morning there:
Oh! young and lovely creatures,
One lamp, from out your store,
Would give that poor boy's features
To her fond gaze once more.

4.

The morning sun is shining —
She heedeth not its ray;
Beside her dead, reclining,
That pale, dead mother lay!
A smile her lip was wreathing,
A smile of hope and love,
As though she still were breathing —
“There's light for us above!”

THE LIGHT OF HOME.

My son, thou wilt dream the world is fair,
And thy spirit will sigh to roam,
And thou *must* go ; — but never, when there,
Forget the light of Home !

Though pleasure may smile with a ray more bright,
It dazzles to lead astray ;
Like the meteor's flash, 't will deepen the night
When treading thy lonely way : —

But the hearth of home has a constant flame,
And pure as vestal fire, —
'T will burn, 't will burn for ever the same,
For nature feeds the pyre.

The sea of ambition is tempest-tossed,
And thy hopes may vanish like foam, —

When sails are shivered and compass lost,
Then look to the light of Home!

And there, like a star through the midnight cloud,
Thou shalt see the beacon bright;
For never, till shining on thy shroud,
Can be quenched its holy light.

The sun of fame may gild the *name*,
But the *heart* ne'er felt its ray;
And fashion's smiles that rich ones claim,
Are beams of a wintry day:

How cold and dim those beams would be,
Should Life's poor wanderer come! —
My son, when the world is dark to thee,
Then turn to the light of Home.

NOTHING NEW.

"There is nothing new under the sun."—SOLOMON.

God! thou hast fixed the date of man,
And who would lengthen out the span?
Enough of pain, of toils and tears
Meet in the round of seventy years;
And earth must like a desert spread,
When all life's flowers are plucked and dead

One year—the seasons' changes o'er—
What would a thousand teach us more?
Each hath its garland and its gloom,
Its joyous festival and doom,—
And ancient lyre and modern lay
Chant the same strain to welcome May.

The dawn has kissed yon eastern hills,
 But eve's dark shade the valley fills ;—
 And thus, let centuries pass, arrayed
 In robe of mist, half light, half shade,
 Will Morning come, and wake the throng
 That plod life's beaten path along.

And see, old Night her crown puts on,
 Undimmed as when o'er Babylon
 She wooed the Magi's thoughtful eye
 To trace her starry page on high,—
 And so the sky has ever shone,
 Blue, bright, and boundless—and unknown !

And Man is weak and wayward still,
 As proud to plan, as prone to ill,—
 The boasted knowledge he acquires
 Is but the wisdom of his sires ;
 And still, from age to age, the same
 The chase of pleasure, wealth and fame.

Then who would be a slave, and dwell
For ever in a dungeon cell,
Counting the links that form his chain ?
— Such is the Soul that would retain
The fetters forged by Time, to bind
To this poor world th' immortal Mind !

STANZAS.

THE bird, that soars on joyous wing,
Must stoop to earth when darkness reigns ;
The flowers, that gem the breast of spring,
Fade when the frost comes o'er the plains ;
And thus gay Fancy droops her flight,
Beneath affliction's starless night,—
And thus sweet Feeling's hopes are lost,
Chilled by Neglect's unkindly frost.

Morn smiles the gloomy night away,—
The bird again may seek the skies ;
And in the life-imparting ray
The sad and shrinking flowrets rise ;
But often, Genius, thou must pine,
On thee no fostering sun will shine ;
And pride, with cold, averted eye,
Beholds thy sweetest blossoms die.

I SING TO HIM.

I sing to *him* ! I dream he hears
The song he used to love,
And oft that blessed fancy cheers
And bears my thoughts above.
Ye say 't is idle thus to dream—
But why believe it so ?
It is the spirit's meteor gleam
To soothe the pang of wo.

Love gives to nature's voice a tone
That true hearts understand,—
The sky, the earth, the forest lone
Are peopled by his wand ;
Sweet fancies all our pulses thrill
While gazing on a flower,
And from the gently whisp'ring rill
Is heard the words of power.

I breathe the dear and cherished name,
And long-lost scenes arise;
Life's glowing landscape spreads the same;
The same Hope's kindling skies;—
The violet bank, the moss-fringed seat
Beneath the drooping tree,
The clock that chimed the hour to meet,
My buried love, with thee—

O, these are all before me, when
In fancy's realms I rove;
Why urge me to the world again?
Why say the ties of love,
That death's cold, cruel grasp has riven,
Unite no more below?
I'll sing to him,—for though in heaven,
He surely heeds my wo!

AN EVENING REVERIE.

I wonder if the rich man prays?—

And how his morning prayer is said?

He'll ask for health, and length of days—

But does he pray for daily bread?

When by his door, in posture meek,

He sees the poor man waiting stand,

With sunken eye, and care-worn cheek,

To beg employment from his hand:

And when he tells his piteous tale,

Of sickly wife, and children small,

Of rents that rise, and crops that fail,

And troubles that the poor befall:

I wonder if the rich man's thought

Mounts free, as nature's hymn, to heaven,

In gratitude that happier lot,
By providence, to him is given !

And does his heart exult to know,
He too, like heaven, has power to give ?
To strengthen weakness, soften wo,
And bid Hope's dying lamp revive ?

And when, around his gladsome hearth,
A troop of friends the rich man greet,
And songs of joy and smiles of mirth
Add grace to flattery's homage sweet ;

I wonder if his fancy sees
A vision of those wretched homes,
Where want is wrestling with disease,
And scarce a ray of comfort comes !

And when the wintry tempest beats,
And wakes him from his soft repose,

While every gust a dirge repeats
For those who die 'mid want and woes ;

— I wonder if he listening lies,
And wishes for the morning light,
That he may dry the weeping eyes,
And comfort those whose life is night !

Oh, World ! how strange thy lots are given ! —
Life's aim — how rarely understood !
And men — how far estranged from heaven,
If heaven require a brotherhood !

THE

HISTORY OF THE PLANETS.

Jehovah spoke through the inbreathing fire,
Nature's vast realms for ever to inspire
With the deep worship of a living soul.

HEMANS.

"CREATION is finished!"—In worship profound,
The Angels bowed down at the word;
Then on the bright Planets their eyes wandered
round,
But rested with joy on the third;
They knew that the Earth held the Paradised pair,
Jehovah's own breath had endued,
The crowning perfection of all that was fair,
Where all had been hallowed as "good!"
They knew from this Fountain of Being would rise,
Like dews from the ocean, Life's Hosts for the skies.

Each Planet was fair—but their Queen, as they
rolled,
Was Earth with its Eden of bliss;

God's children were here — and the angels behold

All Planets do homage to this;—

Swift Mercury shed from its sun-hidden way,

On the mind of the Woman its light,—

And Venus was blushing with love's purple ray,

It sent to her heart warm and bright,—

Thus the tribute of matter to life was begun

By the Planets that move 'twixt the Earth and the
Sun.

Beyond rolled red Mars, like the tocsin of war,

To action man's spirit it cheered;—

Then followed the largest and loveliest Star,

Pure diamond its lustre appeared;

Its beautiful ray was the mirror of Truth,—

Sweet Innocence played in the light;

Wherever it shone bloomed the freshness of youth,

Unshadowed by sorrow or blight,—

Its beams o'er the soul of the Woman were thrown,—

On Earth as her Guardian Planet 'twas known.

Next Jupiter, regal in splendour, swept by,
Man's reason to raise and refine,
While lifting, untroubled, his gaze to the sky,
He welcomed the Presence Divine;—
Then, coursing an orbit that circled the whole,
Came Saturn, like Patience, untired,
And through its broad range giving light to the soul
Of Man, a calm wisdom inspired;—
And all these fair Planets in harmony move
Round the Sun, as their centre of light, life and love.

In wonder the angels bent over the Earth,
And sought for the human abode,
When the Stars of the morning together sang forth
Their anthem of "Glory to God!"
And a shout of rejoicing was heard to arise,
It burst like a torrent of sound,
As the harps of the Seraphim poured from the skies
The music of Heaven around;—
The melody through the Empyrean flowed,
"Creation is finished!—all glory to God!"

'T was glorious all — the beauty of peace
Smiled over the Earth and the skies ;—
But the harps of the Seraphim suddenly cease,
And wailings of terror arise !
The Shadow of Death over Eden comes down,—
The Earth from its centre is whirled,—
Creation is darkened and shook by the frown
Jehovah has thrown on the world !
It passed !—but the Guardian* Planet was gone,
While, dim in the distance, cold Herschel crept on !

Awe-stricken, the Angels recoiled at the sight,—
A sigh through the Universe ran,—
The Stars of the morning were shrouded in night,—
As mourning the ruin of Man !

* Between Mars and Jupiter move four planets, viz., Ceres, Pallas, Juno, and Vesta. It has been conjectured, by learned astronomers, that these small planets were formed by the disruption of a large planet, once revolving in that region of space. This planet we have assumed to be "the Guardian," and that the catastrophe of its disruption was coincident with

— " Man's first disobedience."

But out of the darkness there issued a Dove,
Like Hope from the breast of Despair;
Its white wings beat time to its breathings of love,
While a voice thrilled the listening air—
“ Though Sin has the prime of Creation destroyed,
And the Guardian Planet is gone,
Yet the Star of Redemption shall rise through the
void,
And the Heavens new glory put on—
A glory to banish Man’s sorrows and fears,
When the Saviour, the Seed of the Woman, ap-
pears !”

THE
HEART'S FOUNT OF STRENGTH.

Oh! 't is the heart that magnifies this life
Making a truth and beauty of its own.

WORDSWORTH.

“ ANOTHER year! and what to me unsealing?
Another page in Sorrow's book of life,
With the dark stamp of Fate impressed, revealing
Another struggle in the world's stern strife?
While the bright hopes that charmed my youthful
vision,
Frown like a winter forest, dead and sere,
And fancies, mirage-like, that seemed Elysian,
Fade, and earth's desert sands alone appear.

“ Even had I gained, as once I strove to merit,
Some high estate in honour's gilded show,

What, with my failing strength and fainting spirit,
 Could fame, or power, or wealth avail me now ?
 The feeble reed, storm-broken, may recover,
 But the firm oak, uprooted, must decay ;
 I'll strive no more — hopes, plans, and dreams are
 over,
 Welcome, despair ! ay, night that has no day !”

“ Father !” in love’s sweet tone, like doves caressing,
 Is heard — a white arm round his neck is twining,
 A soft, warm cheek to his is fondly pressing,
 A fairy form upon his breast reclining ;
 His daughter, image of her angel mother —
 Her smile how happy as she meets his gaze !
 He is her guide, guard, all — she asks no other ;
 As the bud brightens in the sun’s mild rays,

So has his tender care her being cherished,
 So has her deep’ning love his care repaid —

And now, when every earth-reared plant has
perished,

This blessed human blossom does not fade !
And from the father's eyes, like warm rains rushing,
That melt the ice even on the glacier's breast,
The tears of thankful gratitude are gushing,
That he can bless her and by her be blest.

And now the cloud, from o'er life's path receding,
Reveals a lovely vale of calm existence,
Bright with those low, sweet flowers we crush un-
heeding,

When struggling toward the laurel in the dis-
tance ;
He sees, in such retreat, how man may measure
Pride's high aspirings with that wisdom lowly,
Which finds in wayside springs rich draughts of
pleasure,
In daily deeds of kindness beauty holy.

He feels the God-breathed soul should never falter,
When pressing onward duties to fulfil;
And that when truth and virtue rear the altar,
How the high purpose can sustain the will;
That to this sacrifice of self is given
An energy all human ills above,
Thus witnessing, as by a voice from Heaven,
The heart's pure fount of strength is generous love.

THE STORM.

THE storm was wild as wrath, —
And like giant on his path
Swept the wind!
There's a sound, like sorrow's moan,
When its last, fond hope has flown,
And the mind,
That to strive with Fate is fain,
Feels its efforts are in vain.

The Storm is on the sea,
And, rising fearfully
O'er the blast,
Comes the wildly piercing shriek!
Its wail no words can speak —
'T is the last! —

And ocean's pall is spread,
And the deep receives the dead !

Oh ! thousands thus have died,
In their beauty and their pride,
Like the flowers
By the whirlwind's might upturn ; —
How many hearts, forlorn,
Count the hours
Till the missing shall return,
Or hope's star shall cease to burn !

Such hearts the history hear, —
Though no language meet the ear —
Of the lost, —
A picture of the sea,
Or a tone of minstrelsy,
Like a frost
O'er their spring-sown fancies steals,
And Death's upas vale reveals.

'T is the pledge of sorrow's dower,
That it gives the spirit power
 To discern,
Like the angel in the sun,*
When the ruin has begun —
 But to learn
That the poison-drop is sure
Will ne'er teach us to endure.

Like a mountain robed in clouds
Is the heart that fear enshrouds,
 While hope clings
As the verdure to the rocks,
As the rainbow tint that mocks
 While it flings
Its soft and cheering beams,
That must pass away like dreams.

* Uriel. See *Paradise Lost*, Book IV.

As a mountain lone and bleak,
With its sky-encompassed peak
 Thunder riven,
Still lifts its forehead bare,
Through the cold and blighting air,
 Up to heaven,
Is the soul that knows its wo,
And is nerved to bear the blow.

And if sad forebodings press,
And earth's star of happiness
 Has withdrawn,
Never sink in hopeless gloom —
Through the clouds, beyond the tomb,
 See the dawn;
And all storms will pass away,
In that world of perfect day!

THE RECORD TREE.

Yes, I am changed—but still the tree remains
As green and beautiful as when its shade,
Screening from arid heats the fresh, soft grass,
With tufts of moss and the wood-violet mixed,
I deemed the sweetest spot the earth contained.
'T was here my childhood's gambols oft were played;
'T was here my youthful visions brightest came;
'T was here my spirit felt devotion's power,
And framed its first spontaneous prayer to heaven:—
Till then the orisons my mother taught,
When o'er my pillow bowed she kissed my cheek,
And bade me sleep, for God would watch the rest
Of all who called him "Father" in their hearts,
Was all the adoration I had given.

Oh! why do heavenly visions from the mind
Pass, like the rainbow mists that wreath around
And tinge with beauty the unsightly rock?—
While like that rock, when shivered by the storm,
The fragments of our worldly schemes must lie
Athwart our path, and every step be pained
With fears or dread, with sorrow or remorse.

Miranda! can thine image sorrow wake?
As strives the anchorite to purchase heaven,
I strove her smile of tenderness to win:
And I did win it, and beneath this Tree
We pledged our mutual faith!—I see her now,
The smile and tear on her soft, blushing cheek,
Like light and dew on the sweet morning rose,
When here this Record of our names I showed,
Deep carved upon the Tree.—And then she said,
In those dear dove-like tones, which naught but love
Can teach the human voice—"The heart alone
Keeps records undefaced."—And then she paused,

And raised her dewy eyes and met my gaze.

— I vowed fidelity, and she believed !

'T was then, as now, the season of bright flowers,
And thus the sun's last beams their radiance flung,
Gilding the brow of yonder Alpine hill ;
And, mellowed by the distance and the glow,
The rugged peak looked beautiful—as fair
As did the world before me. Love was mine,
And Hope's bright beams Ambition's summit
crowned,—

I gained it—there was nought save barrenness !

And then, Miranda, I remembered thee :—
Remembered, did I say ?—I ne'er forgot ;—
But man, amid the bustling world, casts off
The chords of tenderness that tune his soul
While dwelling in the calm, domestic scene.
Home is the sphere of harmony and peace,

The spot where angels find a resting-place,
When, bearing blessings, they to earth descend.

But perfect peace makes not her gods of clay ;
And home, the blessed Eden of our earth,
May feel a blight come o'er its fairest flowers—
The wasting blight of unrequited love.
And thus, my gentle one, thy heart was broke.
They tell me thou didst part in peacefulness ;—
Thy Saviour's arm beneath thee, and his smile
So lighting the dark passage to the grave,
That thou, who didst not dare to tread alone,
When night was o'er the world, a well-known path,
Entered the vale of Death with songs of joy.

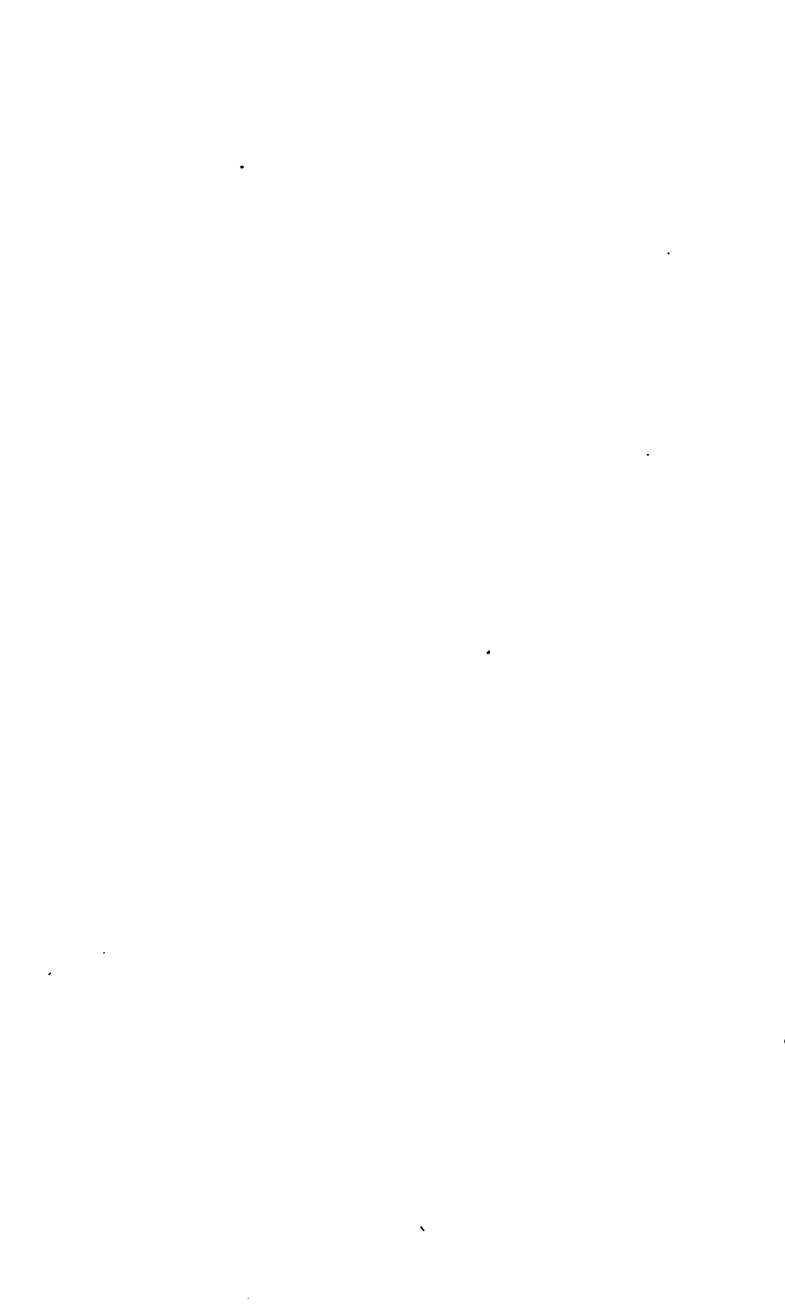
Religion triumphs when her followers die.
Death holds the mighty talisman that shows
The human heart, and seals the character.
And thou, Miranda, wert a child of heaven,
And with the signet of the Saviour sealed,

And angels welcomed thee, and thou hast seen
The glory of His light who made the sun!—
While I, poor earth-bound pilgrim, wander here,
And still life's darkened desert round me spreads.

But while this Record, weeping, I peruse,
Where thy dear name is still with mine conjoined,
One hope, with seraph lustre, beams afar—
The hope that we may meet.

My soul's first prayer,
The morning incense of my life, arose
When here I bowed the knee. Give to the world
The heart, and soul, and strength—there's no reward,
Save barren promises, or bitter bread;—
But all the hours we dedicate to God
Bear golden fruit. The multitude have bowed,
And watched my smile, and listening senates hung
On my poor eloquence, and thundered praise.
—'T was grand! —'T is nothing!

But that humble prayer
Comes o'er my spirit like a heavenly balm
My bleeding heart to heal. A still, small voice
Seems whispering — "Faith and prayer can bear
thee up,
And many mansions are prepared above,
And harps of angels hail the Penitent."



PART III.

ALICE RAY:

A ROMANCE IN RHYME.



"Break, Phantasy, from thy cave of cloud,
And spread thy purple wings!—
Now all thy figures are allowed,
And various shapes of things.

BEN JONSON.



ALICE RAY.

A ROMANCE IN RHYME.

CANTO I.

ALICE AT HOME.

THE birds their love-notes warble
Among the blossomed trees ;
The flowers are sighing forth their sweets
To wooing honey-bees ;—
The glad brook o'er a pebbly floor
Goes dancing on its way,—
But not a thing is so like spring
As happy Alice Ray.

An only child was Alice,
And, like the blest above,
The gentle maid had ever breathed
An atmosphere of love;
Her father's smile like sunshine came,
Like dew her mother's kiss,
Their love and goodness made her home,
Like heaven, the place of bliss.

Beneath such tender training,
The joyous child had sprung
Like one bright flower, in wild-wood bower,
And gladness round her flung;
And all who met her blessed her,
And turned again to pray,
That grief and care might ever spare
The happy Alice Ray.

The gift that made her charming
Was not from Venus caught;

Nor was it, Pallas-like, derived
From majesty of thought ;—
Her healthful cheek was tinged with brown,
Her hair without a curl ;
But then her eyes were love-lit stars,
Her teeth as pure as pearl.

And when in merry laughter
Her sweet, clear voice was heard,
It welled from out her happy heart
Like carol of a bird ;
And all who heard were moved to smiles,
As at some mirthful lay,
And, to the stranger's look, replied—
“ 'T is that dear Alice Ray.”

And so she came, like sunbeams
That bring the April green ;
As type of nature's royalty,
They called her “ Woodburn's Queen !”

A sweet, heart-lifting cheerfulness,
Like spring-time of the year,
Seemed ever on her steps to wait,—
No wonder she was dear.

Yet though with nature living,
And little taught by rules,
Her mind had often grasped a truth
Beyond the art of schools;—
No Sophist could have moved her faith,—
She knew her Bible true,
And thrice, ere sixteen springs she bloomed,
Had read the good Book through.

In sooth, books oft beguiled her
From work as well as play,
And in their dear companionship
She passed the live-long day—
Sweet Poesy and wild Romance,
Tales of the Wise and Good,

Poor Christian's weary Pilgrimage,
And "Sweetened Solitude."

And, with the Story-tellers,
What friendships had she made !
She pitied lonely Crusoe's lot,
And loved Scheherazade,—
But to the Bard of Avon turned
Her fancy and her heart,
Nor knew which most in him she loved—
The nature or the art.

Her world was ever joyous —
She thought of grief and pain
As giants in the olden time
That ne'er would come again;
The seasons all had charms for her;
She welcomed each with joy,—
The charm that in her spirit lived
No changes could destroy.

Her heart was like a fountain,
• The waters always sweet, —
Her pony in the pasture,
The kitten at her feet,
The ruffling bird of Juno, and
The wren in the old wall —
Each knew her loving carefulness,
And came at her soft call.

Her love made all things lovely,
For in the heart must live
The feeling that imparts the charm —
We gain by what we give.
She never thought of ugliness
Unless with sin conjoined, —
How could dark Envy's shadow creep
On such a warm, pure mind?

And who could dream the future
Had ills for her in store?

Her cup of life seemed filled from springs
With pure joy brimming o'er —
And Piety, like living plant,
Beside the waters rose,
With healing leaves to shelter her
From every storm that blows.

And though, as years rolled onward,
Her parents might be gone,
Yet still the loving Alice
Would never be alone.
Was not young Arthur even now
For ever by her side?
They were too young to marry yet,
But she would be his bride:

So thought the town of Woodburn,
And all the gossips cried —
“A noble Bridegroom he will make!
And she a charming Bride!”

The son of good old Deacon Gray —
And vainly had you gone,
To find a youth like Arthur,
From Maine to Galveston.

He won the prize at college
And in the wrestler's ring;
Could shoot a squirrel in the eye,
Or woodcock on the wing;
He rode with grace and bearing high,
Like Cossack in command;
And his good steed would gently feed,
Like Arab's, from his hand;
And, when he called his dog or steed,
His tones were ever bland.

And he the Law was reading,
And all the neighbours said, —
"He'll make a Judge like Marshall,
With such a heart and head!"

Aunt Mary said the orphan
Would find a friend in him,
For when she told a moving tale,
His eyes with tears were dim.

The brave are ever gentle,
The good should be the gay, —
And Arthur was as bold of heart
As knight in tourney fray, —
His mind was always firm for truth
As rock 'mid ocean's spray ;
And, though a restless daring will
At times he might display,
His wildest moods were calmed at once,
But mention Alice Ray.
And she — though when you talked of him,
She blushed and turned away —
Was still his partner in the dance
And in the dashing sleigh ;
13

— They always searched together
For flowers the first of May;
And duly to the Sabbath School
On every holy day
She went — they both were Teachers there, —
She went with Arthur Gray.

CANTO II.

THE TEMPTATION.

PALE Zephyrus is yielding
His last and sweetest sighs,
And Autumn's mist-like veil is drawn
Athwart the summer skies,
A veil as for a Bride's fair face,
Which loveliness conceals,
And wakens Fancy more than all
That Summer's pride reveals.

What though the thick-leaved forest
Has lost its lustrous green ;
And on the meadow's sobered breast
A shade of brown is seen ; —
We greet, with double blessings,
The bright-eyed gipsy flowers,
That, from departing Summer's hand,
Seem sown in rainbow showers.

We watch the lights and shadows
That frolic o'er the hills,
And deeper sense of Beauty's power
The yearning spirit fills ; —
If God through every change can keep
This earth so good and fair,
We raise our eyes towards heaven and say —
“ What Beauty must be there ! ”

While thus the face of nature
Was beautiful to see,

Young Alice wept in sorrow
Beneath the old elm-tree ;
A wild bird was above her head,
And by her side a flower, —
Oh how has nature o'er her heart
Thus lost its charm and power ?

She has been to Saratoga,
Where crowds of Fashion press,
And her dear, cherished home no more
Has light and pleasantness ;
But deadlier still the poison
That such deep suffering stirs —
The power of Beauty she has *seen*,
And *felt* it was not hers !

She has seen the fair Belinda,
— So exquisitely fair ! —
Like alabaster flushed with life ;
And then her glorious hair,

It clustered round her lovely neck
Like tendrils round a vine, —
And Alice sighed in bitterness —
“ Oh, were such beauty mine !”

Yet not the pride of conquest
Her troubled bosom filled —
The fear she should not be beloved,
— “T was this her being chilled ;
“ Even Arthur Gray,” thus ran her thoughts,
“ Some fairer girl may spy, —
Or leave me for Belinda ; —
Oh, if I could but die !”

While thus her heart was wrestling
With its first crushing fear,
A Voice of stern command out-spoke,
Close to her startled ear, —
“ Go, Maiden, to the Haunted Dell,
And in the ‘ Bloody Spring,’

Where the spotted toad sits drinking,
And the night-bat laves its wing,
And adder snakes are coiling,
Bathe thou thy face and hair —
Bathe thrice, not breathe a word or sound,
And then thou shalt be fair !”

She started from the Tempter ! —
Her heart grew stony cold ;
She knew such gossip stories —
There was a legend old,
How a maid of peerless beauty
Was murdered in that Dell
By wily, ruthless savages, —
And how her fair face fell
In a lone Spring, thence “ Bloody ” called, —
And those who found her there,
And drew her gently forth, their hands
Had all waxed wondrous fair.

Yet still she felt 't was sinful
To try such awful spell,
'T was plain that naught but evil
Could live in that lone dell;
No human foot approached it—
'T was far, and wild the way;
How could she venture there alone,
This timid Alice Ray?

But still the wish was rising—
Oh, that she could be fair!
She looked towards the haunted dell,—
'T was not such distance there;
The sun was still above the hill,
And she, before 't was night,
Might go and come, and know her doom—
But then, would this be right?

She thought of all strange stories
That she had read or heard,

Of Cinderella's Fairy kind,
And of the "talking bird"—
Of "Undine" from her ocean home,
Wild Fancy's loveliest child,—
And then she thought of "water cures,"—
No dream could be more wild!

But yet she knew her Bible
Would never bid her go;
It could not be an angel
Was keeping watch below,
And, pitying her hopeless grief,
Was counselling its cure—
Oh, no, 't was not an angel—
'T was some foul demon sure!

Such demon as in olden times
Had lured young girls away,
In guise of gallant Troubadour,
Or holy Friar grey,

And now was lurking round her path,
Her precious soul to win;
And should she listen to his wiles,
And do this deadly sin?

She hurried to her chamber,
To 'scape the dreadful snare,—
The words of that commanding Voice
Seemed sounding even there,—
“Go, maiden, to the ‘Bloody Spring,’
And bathe thy face and hair,
Bathe thrice, nor breathe a sound nor word,
—Thou shalt be wondrous fair.”

CANTO III.

THE HAUNTED DELL.

WHEN soft the gales are blowing,

And calm is ocean's wave,

So small the danger seemeth

That every heart is brave ;—

But let the tempest rise in wrath,

The ocean flout the sky,—

The firmest shriek, in agony,

“Lord, save us, or we die!”

And while in peace abiding,

Within a sheltered home,

We feel as sin and evil —

Could never, never come ;—

But let the strong temptation rise,

As whirlwinds sweep the sea—

We find no strength to 'scape the wrock,

Save, pitying God, in Thee.

Wise men have worshipped Mammon,
And lost their souls for gold ;
Pure women, for the pride of life,
Their priceless hearts have sold ;
And for revenge, or power, or fame,
What deeds are done each day, —
And all by beings, guiltless once
As gentle Alice Ray !

Then blame not too severely
The wish of this young girl
To have a face as fair as day,
And hair of graceful curl !
She fondly trusts by Beauty's power
Her Lover's heart to bind, —
For this, for this she trembling goes
The "Bloody Spring" to find.

And she has crossed the brooklet,
And scaled the mountain steep,

And down, and downward winds her path,
 Into a valley deep—
Above her crowd the fir trees,
 Dark, motionless, and tall,
She hears no sound on that lone ground,
 Save her own light foot-fall.

And thrice her step hath stumbled
 O'er deadly hemlock roots;
And thrice the poison ivy
 Hath clasped her with its shoots;
And thrice a white owl hooted,
 Close to her throbbing ear,
And seemed to ask her conscience,
 What dost thou, Maiden, here?

Still on — the Dell is entered,
 And reached the "Bloody Spring,"
And here she nearly fainted —
 She felt the night-bat's wing

Cold on her cheek — yet down she stooped
And bathed her face and hair ;
And all around was lone and still
As Death were watching there !

Again, but very slowly,
She bends as with a load —
Well may she start and shudder —
She grasped the slimy toad ;
— But cast it from her, like a stone,
And bathed her face and hair ;
And all around was dark and still
As Death were listening there.

Again, but slow and slower,
She bendeth o'er the Spring, —
The bat is wheeling round and round,
She feels its clammy wing ; —
The toad is creeping o'er her foot —
Yet mindful of the charm,
14

She bore her bravely till she felt
The snakes coil round her arm !

Oh ! then she lost her footing,
And prone she would have sunk,
But for a black-thorn's ragged branch —
Sole branch from rotting trunk ;
She grasped it in her agony,
The foul snakes dropped away, —
And with her arms all bleeding,
Fled fainting Alice Ray.

She reached her home scarce living, —
But when the morning shone,
And she her faithful mirror sought —
How fair her face had grown !
The freckles all had vanished,
Her cheek was like the dawn,
The blush half struggling through the light,
Like rose-leaf under lawn.

And then her hair was flowing,
And kept in curl so long;
How could she think the spell had been
So very, very wrong!
The treacherous heart will deem success
Has sanctified the deed;
The first step costs — but easy then
Sin's downward path will lead, —
This moral from her story learn,
— Of thy first step take heed.

For oh, what worldly passions
Were working in her breast!
What dreams of ball-room conquests
Now broke her pillowed rest!
Her pony whinnied as she passed—
She never seemed to hear;
Her birds came round—she strewed no seeds,
And they withdrew in fear;
Her books had lost their charm and power,

And even her Bible lay
Unopened near her toilet glass—
Wo! wo! for Alice Ray.

Then flatterers flocked around her,
In proud and rich array;
And every day her charms increased,
Like some rare flower of May,
That opened later than the rest,
The sooner will decay;—
Still she was true to Arthur,
And might have been alway;
But from the city's courtly ranks
A lover rich and gay,
Smit with her face and flowing curls,
His homage came to pay.
And princely in his port was he,
And winning in his way,
And versed in love's seductive wiles,
He knew just what to say,—

And so he won fair Alice—
How could she say him, “nay”!—
And she has left her dear, dear home,
Home of her infant play
And childhood’s joy;—but there are ties
Which never can decay;
However dear new friends may be,
However far she stray,
She yet will see her Mother weep,
And hear her Father pray,—
Praying for her happiness,
Weeping in dismay,
That she, their dear and only child,
Must go so far away!—
She bade farewell to them, to all—
Farewell to Arthur Gray.

CANTO IV.

THE RETRIBUTION.

AROUND the sides of Etna
How fair the gardens grow,—
Yet burning Desolation
Is fierce and near below !—
While straying 'mid the vines and flowers,
We rarely pause to think,
How close this Beauty presses on
Destruction's awful brink !

And when the gay are flaunting,
Like flowers from hot-house brought,
We oft forget their blindest smile
Conceals some burning thought
Of pain, remorse or envy,
The surface hid beneath,—

Oh many wear the flowers without
Whose hearts are filled with death !

When all looks fair in seeming,
And outwardly serene,
We say " 't is good ;"—but had we power
To lift the veil between,
And see how passion's lava
Is gathering in the breast,
While Justice, like a hidden stream
That cannot be suppressed,
Is wearing channels, day by day,
And coming nigh and nigher,—
How we should warn the world to flee
From sin's volcanic fire !

Ay, Justice, who evades her ?
Her scales reach every heart ;
The action and the motive,
She weigheth each apart ;

And none who swerve from right or truth
Can 'scape her penalty;—
Oh! sore the Retribution,
Poor Alice, laid on thee.

Yet Alice had not broken
A law that men endite;
But still, in her own mind she saw
The Law in purer light;
Had she not pined for Beauty,
With Envy's selfish eye,
And wed a man she did not love
For wealth, and station high?

She knew she did not love him,
Not with that pure, heart-love,
A true wife for her husband feels,
Kindled from heaven above:—
To wed a man one does not love,
What suffering to incur!

But Alice had another grief—

Her husband loved not her:—

That is,—’t was not his nature

To love with constancy;

When dazzled by her beauty,

And she a novelty,

He loved,—but soon the holy charm

Had lost its light and power,

And he would leave her lone and sad

For some new toy or flower.

She felt the change as woman

Feels, with the deepest pain,

And often strove, by sweetest wiles,

To lure his heart again;—

She wore the colours he admired,

The jewels he had given,

And met him with a face of smiles

Even when her heart was riven.

When once she tried to tell him
How she her bird had freed,
And how it nestled in her neck —
He only cried — “ Indeed !
Where is the paper ? ’T is the day
To learn whose racer wins ; —
And then, to-night, with that new star,
The Opera begins.”

Their souls were never mated, —
Hers centred in a home
Where all was truth and tenderness,
And none but dear ones come ;
His joy was found on Pleasure’s tide,
With gay companions nigh,
And should they sink, it mattered not,
If he but held a buoy ; —
The motto graven on his seal
Was, “ *I* — and only *I* ”

What wonder that in sadness
The loving Alice pined ;—
Had Heaven her lot appointed
She might have been resigned ;
But 't was the bitter chalice
Which she herself had filled, —
It was the deadly Upas plant —
Her Envy had distilled.

What cared she now for Beauty ?
Her Husband marked it not, —
Her flowing hair might sweetly curl,
— Its colour he forgot ;
Her face was like Belinda's fair,
And yet he turned away
And gazed, and praised some painted thing
That flaunted in the play.

Yet still the hoping Alice
Was so unused to grief,

She tried to think some good would come,
Some change would bring relief;
But days, weeks — months, are passing by,
And still her chains grow stronger;
She felt her sorrow was so great
She could not bear it longer.

And now kind thoughts of Arthur
Would with her dreamings come,
She strove to drive him from her mind —
But he was near her home,
And all she loved and sighed to see, —
As well forget her prayer
As him who often by her side
Had knelt that right to share.

And he had loved her truly,
And she to him was fair,
But now, with all her Beauty,
No one for her would care;

She felt the crisis coming,
Even her bright hopes had fled,
She wished but for her mother
To hold her throbbing head.

And when the blush of morning
Burst on the eastern sky,
The high roofs seemed like leaden weights
Upon her lifted eye,—
And when, as blessed evening came,
She looked towards the west,
She felt as if the cold, hard walls
Were closing round her breast!

And dreadful was the struggle
Of the last dying scene,—
Oh, what despairing thoughts arose,
With tears and prayers between!
The last pang came—she gave one shriek,
As though her heart-strings broke,—

And then a hand clasped hers, and then
The breathless girl——awoke!

She woke, and there was Arthur,
Beneath that old elm tree,
With face of ashy pallor,
Beside her on his knee;—
“What ails thee, Alice, dearest?
Thy cry was strange and wild;”
She laid her head upon his breast,
And wept as weeps a child.

And ere she ceased her sobbing,
She told him all her woes,
From her Saratoga sorrows,
To that dark Vision's close:
She said—“My heart was wrong and weak,
How could I be so dull!
But now my dream has taught me this,
The loved are beautiful.”

Forgive me, oh, forgive me,
My foolishness and pride!"
— He whispered he forgave her all—
And something more beside;
I could not hear distinctly,
For song began to flow,
The joyous bird was over-head,
And lovers speak so low.

But this I know—ere Autumn
Put on his Winter grey—
While yet the melted rainbow,
'Mid forest shadow lay,
And trees were flushed with glory
More rich than flowers of May—
Though very late the season
For such a grand array,
It seemed as Earth kept on her robes
For Festival display—
But on the Friday after

That bright Thanksgiving-Day,*
Had you in Woodburn village
Enquired for Alice Ray—
They would have smiled and said—"She now
Is Mrs. Arthur Gray!"

* "Thou shalt keep a fast unto me, in the end of the year, when thou hast gathered in thy labors out of the field," was the command of God to his chosen people. The "Thanksgiving-Day," established soon after the settlement of New England, by the Pilgrim Fathers, obeys this requisition of joyful gratitude, and seems the natural out-pouring of thankfulness for the abundance which in autumn is gathered into the overflowing garner of America. From New England the custom has been gradually extending itself, and last year the Thanksgiving-Day was kept in twenty-one, out of the twenty-nine States. In a few more years, we hope and trust the day will become a national Jubilee. Though the appointment must be always made by the State authorities, yet this might be done in concert, and a particular day—the last Thursday in November,—might be *the day* in every State and Territory. Then, though the members of the same family might be too far separated to meet around one festive board, they would have the gratification of knowing that all were enjoying the blessings of the day. From the St. Johns to the Rio Grande, from the Atlantic to the Pacific border, the telegraph of human happiness would move every heart to rejoice simultaneously, and render grateful thanks to God for the blessings showered on our beloved country.

THE MISSISSIPPI,

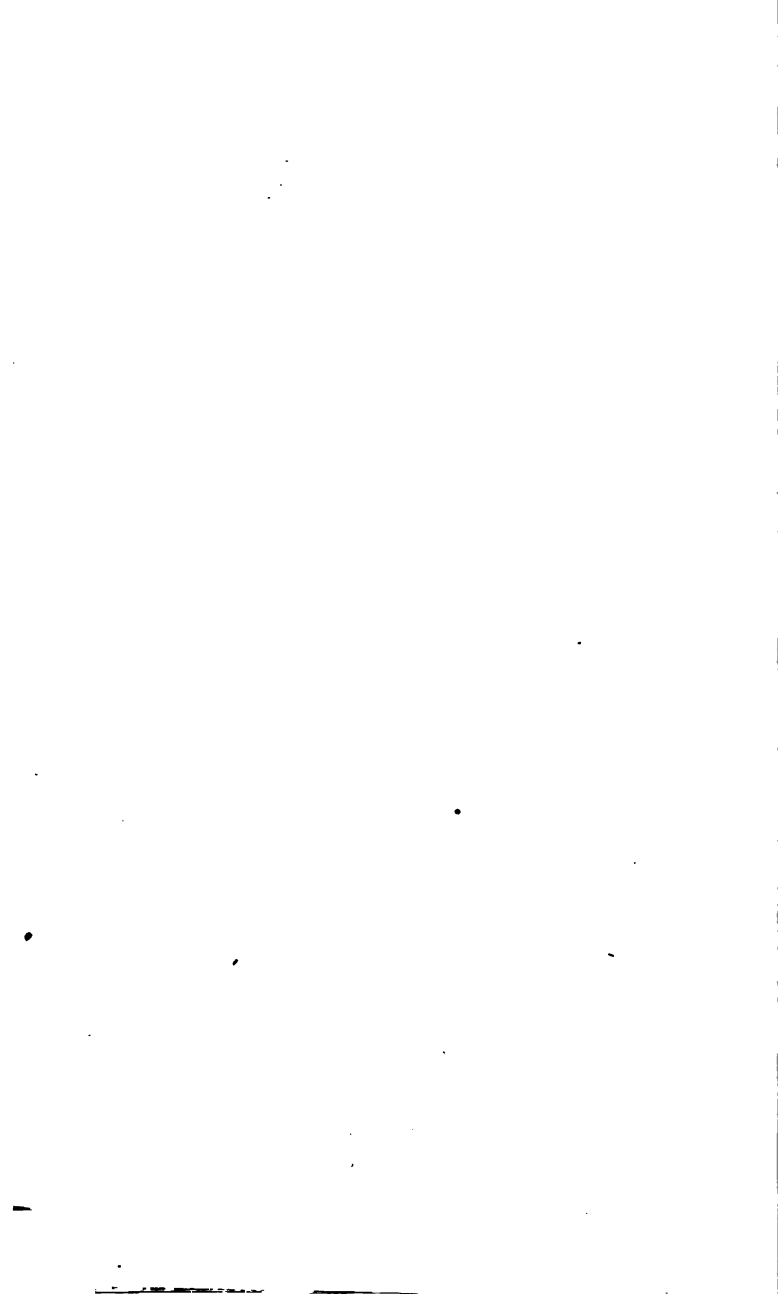
AND

OTHER POEMS.



Waking affections that might else have slept,
Or high resolves.—

LONDON.



THE MISSISSIPPI.

MONARCH of Rivers in the wide domain
Where Freedom writes her signature in stars,
And bids her Eagle bear the blazing scroll
To usher in the reign of peace and love,
Thou mighty Mississippi ! — may my song
Swell with thy power, and though an humble rill,
Roll, like thy current, through the sea of Time,
Bearing thy name, as tribute from my soul
Of fervent gratitude and holy praise,
To Him who poured thy multitude of waves.

Shadowed beneath those awful piles of stone,
Where Liberty has found a Pisgah height,
O'erlooking all the Land she loves to bless, —
The jagged rocks and icy towers her guard,
Whose splintered summits seize the warring clouds,

And roll them, broken, like a host o'erthrown,
Adown the Mountains' side, scattering their wealth
Of powdered pearl and liquid diamond drops,—
THERE is thy Source, — great River of the West!

Slowly, like youthful Titan gathering strength
To war with heaven and win himself a name,
The stream moves onward through the dark ravine,
Rending the roots of over-arching trees
To form its narrow channel, where the star,
That fain would bathe its beauty in the wave,
Like lover's glance steals, trembling, through the
leaves

That veil the waters with a vestal's care; —
And few of human form have ventured there,
Save the swart savage in his bark canoe.

But now it deepens, struggles, rushes on;
Like goaded war-horse, bounding o'er the foe,
It clears the rocks it may not spurn aside,

Leaping, as Curtius leaped, adown the gulf, —
And rising, like Antæus, from the fall,
Its course majestic through the Land pursues,
And the broad River o'er the Valley reigns !

It reigns alone. The tributary streams
Are humble vassals, yielding to its sway.
And when the wild Missouri fain would join
A rival in the race — as Jacob seized
On his red brother's birth-right, even so
The swelling Mississippi grasps that wave,
And, rebaptizing, makes the waters one.

It reigns alone — and Earth the sceptre feels : —
Her ancient trees are bowed beneath the wave,
Or, rent like reeds before the whirlwind's swoop,
Toss on the bosom of the maddened flood,
A floating forest, till the waters, calmed,
Like slumbering anaconda gorged with prey,
Open a haven to the moving mass,
Or form an island in the dark abyss.

It reigns alone. Old Nile would ne'er bedew
The Lands it blesses with its fertile tide.
Even sacred Ganges joined with Egypt's flood
Would shrink beside this wonder of the West !
Ay, gather Europe's royal Rivers all —
The snow-swelled Neva, with an Empire's weight
On her broad breast, she yet may overwhelm ;
Dark Danube, hurrying, as by foe pursued,
Through shaggy forests and from palace walls,
To hide its terrors in a sea of gloom ;
The castled Rhine, whose vine-crowned waters
 flow,
The fount of fable and the source of song ;
The rushing Rhone, in whose cerulean depths
The loving sky seems wedded with the wave ;
The yellow Tiber, choked with Roman spoils,
A dying miser shrinking 'neath his gold ;
And Seine, where Fashion glasses fairest forms ;
And Thames, that bears the riches of the world : —
Gather their waters in one ocean mass,

— Our Mississippi, rolling proudly on,
Would sweep them from its path, or swallow up,
Like Aaron's rod, these streams of fame and song !

And thus the Peoples, from the many Lands,
Where these old streams are household memories,
Mingle beside our River, and are one ;
And join to swell the strength of Freedom's tide,
That from the fount of Truth is flowing on
To sweep Earth's thousand tyrannies away.

How wise — how wonderful the works of God !
And, hallowed by his goodness, all are good.
The creeping glow-worm — the careering sun
Are kindled from the effluence of his light.
The ocean and the acorn-cup are filled
By gushings from the fountain of his love.
He poured the Mississippi's torrent forth,
And heaved its tide above the trembling land, —
Grand type how Freedom lifts the Citizen

Above the *subject* masses of the world —
And marked the limits it may never pass.
Trust in His promises, and bless His power,
Ye dwellers on its banks, and be at peace.

And ye, whose way is on this warrior wave,
When the swoln waters heave with ocean's might,
And storms and darkness close the gate of heaven,
And the frail bark, fire-driven, bounds quivering on,
As though it rent the iron shroud of night,
And struggled with the demons of the flood —
Fear nothing! He who shields the folded flower,
When tempests rage, is ever present here.
Lean on "Our Father's" breast in faith and prayer,
And sleep, — His arm of love is strong to save.

Great Source of Being, Beauty, Light and Love!
Creator! Lord! the waters worship thee!
Ere thy creative smile had sown the flowers;

Ere the glad hills leaped upward, or the earth,
With swelling bosom, waited for her child ;
Before eternal Love had lit the sun,
Or Time had traced his dial-plate in stars,
The joyful anthem of the waters flowed ; —
And Chaos like a frightened felon fled,
While on the Deep the Holy Spirit moved.

And evermore the Deep has worshipped God ;
And Bards and Prophets tune their mystic lyres
While listening to the music of the floods.
Oh ! could I catch this harmony of sounds,
As borne on dewy wings they float to heaven,
And blend their meaning with my closing strain !

Hark ! as a reed-harp thrilled by whispering winds,
Or Naiad murmurs from a pearl-lipped shell,
It comes — the melody of many waves !
And loud, with Freedom's world-awaking note,

The deep-toned Mississippi leads the choir.

— The pure sweet Fountains chant of heavenly
hope ;

The chorus of the Rills is household love ;

The Rivers roll their song of social joy ;

And Ocean's organ voice is sounding forth

The Hymn of Universal Brotherhood !

MIDNIGHT MUSINGS

THE future—would that I could turn
Its page, this deep midnight !
Or from yon radiant stars, that burn
Like droppings of heaven's light,
Treasure one pure and peaceful ray,
To shine above my onward way.

I seek not, in its light, to see
The splendors wealth can give ;
Enough, there is for mine, for me,
The humble hope—to live ;
And I have calmed my spirit down,
And look unmoved on fortune's frown.

Nor do I ask to find my name
Inscribed on years to come ;
None but the loftiest strength of fame
Should triumph o'er the tomb :
I would not dim my Country's light,
To keep a feeble taper bright.

O, not for *self* the light I seek !
For them, for them who share,
At evening's close, at morning's break.
My ponderings, and my prayer—
Would that I knew their destiny !
And yet, my God, they're safe with Thee.

THE FIRST SWALLOW.

"One swallow does not make a summer."—OLD PROVERB.

Out on the wisdom frozen
By ice-cold doubts and fears!
Why should life's path be chosen
Through sorrow's vale of tears?
A child, how I detested
The "ifs" and "buts" to hear,
When, with Hope's charm invested,
Some promised joy was near—
Still in my heart is shining
The light divine, which lends
Each cloud a silver lining,
O'er storms a rainbow bends.

Then welcome little swallow,
Thou'lt bring the summer fair—

With pleasant thoughts I follow
Thy waltzing through the air ;
What though bright flowers have faded,
That once my pathway blessed,
What though green bowers are shaded,
Where sunshine used to rest,—
Yet still my soul rejoices,
And every shadow flies,
When Nature's thousand voices,
In summer gladness rise.

There's not a plant that springeth,
But bears some good to earth,—
There's not a life but bringeth
Its store of harmless mirth—
The dusty way-side clover
Has honey in its cells,
The wild bee, humming over,
Her tale of pleasure tells :

The osiers, o'er the fountain,
Keep cool the water's breast,
And on the roughest mountain
The softest moss is pressed.

Thus holy Wisdom teaches
The worth of blessings small,
That Love pervades, and reaches,
And forms the bliss of all ;
The trusting eye, joy-seeking,
Some Eden finds or makes,
The glad voice, kindly speaking,
Some kindred tone awakes—
Nor need we power or splendor,
Wide hall or lordly dome ;
The good, the true, the tender,
These form the wealth of home.

The pilgrim swallow cometh
To her forsaken nest—

So must the heart that roameth
Return, to find its rest,
Where Love sheds summer's lustre,—
And wheresoe'er 't is found,
There sweetest flowers will cluster,
And dearest joys abound ;
Thus Heaven to all doth render
The prize of happiness ;
The good, the true, the tender,
Earth's lowliest lot may bless.

THE TWO MAIDENS.

ONE came with light and laughing air,
And cheek like opening blossom, —
Bright gems were twined amid her hair,
And glittered on her bosom,
And pearls and costly diamonds deck
Her round, white arms and lovely neck.

Like summer's sky, with stars bedight,
The jewelled robe around her,
And dazzling as the noontide light
The radiant zone that bound her, —
And pride and joy were in her eye,
And mortals bowed as she passed by.

Another came — o'er her sweet face
A pensive shade was stealing;

Yet there no grief of earth we trace—
But the heaven-hallowed feeling
Which mourns the heart should ever stray
From the pure fount of Truth away.

Around her brow, as snow-drop fair,
The glossy tresses cluster,
Nor pearl, nor ornament was there,
Save the meek spirit's lustre;—
And faith and hope beamed in her eye,
And angels bowed as she passed by.

THE SILK-WORM.

THERE is no form upon our earth
That bears the mighty Maker's seal,
But has some charm : — to draw this forth,
We must have hearts to feel.

I saw a fair young girl — her face
Was sweet as dream of cherished friend —
Just at the age when childhood's grace
And maiden softness blend.

A *silk-worm* in her hand she laid,
Nor fear, nor yet disgust was stirred ;
But gaily with her charge she played,
As 't were a nestling bird.

She raised it to her dimpled cheek,
And let it rest and revel there, —
O, why for outward beauty seek —
Love makes its favourites fair !

That worm — I should have shrunk, in truth,
To feel the reptile o'er me move ;
But, loved by innocence and youth,
I deemed it worthy love.

Would we, I thought, the soul imbue,
In early life, with sympathies
For every harmless thing, and view
Such creatures formed to please :

And when with *usefulness* combined,
Give them our love and gentle care —
O, we might have a world as kind
As God has made it fair !

There is no form upon our earth,
Bearing the mighty Maker's seal,
But has some charm : — to call this forth
We need but hearts to feel.

TO THE COMET.

LONE traveller through the fields of air,
What may thy presence here portend?
Art come to greet the planets fair,
As friend greets friend?

And dost thou, to the listening spheres,
The wonders of thy path unfold?
A story that to mortal ears
Was never told?

Beyond the palest gleaming star,
Beyond cold Herschel's slow career,
Thy mystic orbit reaches far,
And yet thou'rt here!

And why? Art sent, by Chaos dread,
To gather from our glorious Sun
Some wealth of light and life, to shed
O'er worlds begun?

Dost come the messenger of Fear,
To warn of fates and foes at hand?
A prophet for the dawning year,
To doom our land?

Or, 'mid the radiant orbs of light,
As borne on eagle's wings, to prove
There dwells, beyond our feeble sight,
Creative love?

And wilt thou, while old Time endures,
Thus ceaselessly thy circuit run?
Or, as the flame the moth allures,
Drawn to the sun,—

Nearer, and nearer, till like stream
To ocean's bosom speeding on,
Thou 'lt vanish as a restless dream,
At morning gone?

Whate'er thy purpose, thou dost teach
Some lessons to the humble soul;
Though far and dim thy pathway reach,
Yet still thy goal

Tends to the fountain of that light
From whence thy golden beams are won;
So should we turn from earth's dark night
To God our Sun.

BONDS.

"He is a freeman whom the truth makes free,
And all are slaves beside."

COWPER.

Ye may place the trusty guard,
Bolt the dark and narrow room,
Bind the heavy fetter hard,
Till the links the flesh consume ;
Never, never, thus confined,
Will enslaved the prisoner be—
There's no fetter on his mind ;
And the spirit will be free,—
If stern memory's thrilling tone
Wake no terrors in his heart ;
In the visioned future, shown,
If he act the lofty part.

Ye may bar him from the air,
And the light of heaven forbid,—
There's a region fresh and fair,
And its smile can ne'er be hid
From the meek and trusting eyes,
Looking upward steadily;
And his thoughts will thus arise,
Till he triumphs with the free,—
If his soul have never bowed
When a golden Image shone—
If among the servile crowd,
He would follow Truth alone.

Ye may deck the lofty hall
With the wealth of earth and sea,
And, in splendor over all
Wave the banners of the free—
Ye may crown the conqueror there,
With the laurels of the brave;

'Mid the honors ye prepare,
He shall feel himself a slave,—
If ambition rule his thought,
And the highest place he ask,
All the labors he has wrought
Are but scourges to his task.

Ye may twine the living flowers
Where the living fountains glide,
And beneath the rosy bowers
Let the selfish man abide,
And the birds upon the wing,
And the barks upon the wave,
Shall no sense of freedom bring;
All is slavery to the slave!
Mammon's close-linked bonds have bound him,
Self-imposed, and seldom burst;
Though heaven's waters gush around him,
He would pine with earth's poor thirst.

MY OWN THOUGHTS.

"FATHER, who art in heaven" — I hear
Low lisped as to a parent's ear,
And in the confidence and love
As He were bending from above —
I would, my child, that I could pray
In such a trusting tone!
I would, that with the closing day,
My cares, like thine, were done!

Yet who that dwells on earth can be,
What the sick heart will pine for — free!
The cords of life around us wind,
Its clouds will gather o'er the mind;
Oh, happy if they rest not there!
If faith's pure, quenchless star

Can struggle through the misty air,
Heavenward, though faint and far.

Without, the sound of hasty feet
Comes upward from the bustling street,
Like rush of brook, that plashes o'er
The pebbles on its rocky shore :
Glides one among that crowd but bears
His weight of grief or pain ?
Is there a soul but hath its cares ?
— Then let me ne'er complain.

The evening's silent hour shall hear
Not murmurs — no — the silent tear
May fall — but thanks for blessings given,
This grateful heart shall breathe to heaven.
And sure, if aught of human rise,
From feeling's altar, there,
The spotless glory of the skies
Will shrine the mother's prayer ; —

The prayer for those whose weal is all
Of price, of hope her own to call —
My treasures; God ! be thou their way,
And never let their footsteps stray ; —
I will not fear, I will not sigh,
But on thy promise rest —
The world is thine, and thou 'lt supply
All that thou seest is best.

IS CHINA OUR NEIGHBOR?

And Jesus said, which was neighbor to him who fell among thieves? —
And the young man answered, he that showed mercy unto him. And Jesus
said, Go thou and do likewise.—*St. Luke.*

●

CAN China be our neighbor,
And yet receive no care?
Shall Christians cease their labor
And leave her to despair?
Her children, sunk in sorrow,
Are sick with many ills,
To-day is sad — to-morrow
A deeper shadow fills.

And bowed in tribulation,
No light athwart the gloom,
That old and haughty nation
Seems hastening to her doom,

The cup of wo is tasted,—

And must she, 'neath war's frown,
Like Babylon be wasted?

Like Egypt trodden down?

Oh! when those nations perished,

No Saviour's name was known,
No brother's love was cherished—

No Christian kindness shown;
Now, where's the heart so frozen
But feels the Gospel ray?

And we, as Freedom's chosen,
Should lead in Mercy's way.

As gentle dews, distilling,

Cause withered plants to live,
So Love, her work fulfilling,
Her alms and prayers must give;
Till China's millions breaking
From sin's dark bonds, arise,

Like death to life awaking,
When Christ descends the skies!

As early flowers, upspringing,
Proclaim the opening year,
So love and hope are bringing
The day of promise near;—
Each tear by pity given,
Each mite in faith bestowed,
Makes earth more like to heaven,
Where all is done for God.

THE STRANGER.

"Is not the scene beautiful?" said the lady.—The tear gathered in the Stranger's eye as he replied—"To you it doubtless appears so—but it recalls to me thoughts of anguish, connected with a similar scene, which destroy its pleasantness."

STRANGER! the word of sadness falls
Like echo in deserted halls,
A sound of mystery, fear and gloom;
In vain the lone heart to beguile,
Bland nature wears her sweetest smile;
Like living flowers upon a tomb,
The beauty all around her spread
But tells of lovelier beauties dead,
And breathes of solitude and doom.

Oh! could we read the thoughts that rise,
While pointing, to the stranger's eyes,
18

Some dear familiar scene we love ;—
The smile may glow, the tear may flow,
But not like ours the joy or wo,
That thus the conscious feelings move ;
The stream of sympathy will start
From fountain gathered in his heart,
Before the desert world he rove.

EIGHTEEN HUNDRED AND THIRTY.

WE bring no earthly wreath for Time ;
To man th' immortal Time was given—
Years should be marked by deeds sublime,
That elevate his soul to heaven.
Thou proudly passing year—thy name
Is registered in mind's bright flame,
And louder than the roar of waves,
Thundering from ocean's prison caves,
Comes the glad shout that hallows thee
The Year of Freedom's Jubilee !

'T is strange how mind has been chained down,
And reason scourged like branded sin !

How man has shrunk before man's frown,
And darkened heaven's own fire within !
But Freedom breathed — the flame burst forth —
Wo to the spoilers of the earth,
Who would withstand its lightning stroke,
And heavier forge the galling yoke ;—
As well the breaking reed might dare
The cataract's rush — the whirlwind's war !

Ay, thrones must crumble — even as clay,
Searched by the scorching sun and wind !
And crushed be Superstition's sway
That would with writhing scorpions bind
The terror-stricken conscience down
Beneath anointed monarch's frown ;
Till Truth is in her temple sought,
The soul's unbribed, unfettered thought,
That, science-guided, soars unawed,
And reading Nature rests on God !

This must be—is—the passing year

Has rent the veil, and despots stand
In the keen glance of Truth severe,

With craven brow and palsied hand :—
Ye, who would make man's spirit free,
And change the Old World's destiny,
Bring forth from Learning's halls the light,
And watch, that Virtue's shield be bright ;
Then to the " God of order " raise
The vow of faith, the song of praise,
And on — and sweep Oppression's chains,
Like ice beneath the vernal rains !

My Country, ay, thy sons are proud,

True heirs of Freedom's glorious dower ;
For never here has knee been bowed

In homage to a mortal power :
No, never here has tyrant reigned,
And never here has thought been chained !

Then who would follow Europe's sickly light,
When here the soul may put forth all her might,
And show the nations, as they gaze in awe,
That Wisdom dwells with Liberty and Law !
O, when will Time his holiest triumph bring—
“Freedom o'er all the earth, and Christ alone reigns
King !”

THE
POWER OF MUSIC.

1.

WHEN Orpheus struck his burning lyre,
Mute Nature caught creative fire, —
Rough stones obeyed the swelling sound,
In mystic measure moved around,
Till, polished by the harmony,
The finished structure, grand and free,
Rose like the star that heralds day,
To show Man's Mind its work and way!

2.

The sword may sever slavery's chain —
The strong arm crush the tyrant's reign,

As lightning from the lurid sky
Shatters and scathes the Temple high ; —
But 't is the sweet-voiced Spring that calls
The ivy o'er the broken walls,
And gently swaying in the blasts,
The fragile plant the Pile outlasts.

3.

And thus the power of Music's breath
Re-clothes the wastes of Time and Death.
The "blind old man" begins his strain,
And Greece is "living Greece" again !
The Songs that flowed on Zion's Hill
Are chanted in God's Temple still,
And to the eye of faith unfold
The glories of His House of old !

4.

Each Prophet-Bard of ancient days
Still breathes for us his lofty lays ;

The words that bear a mission high,
If Music-hallowed, never die ; —
And thus Religion, Law and Art,
Sow their choice seeds in every heart ;
From age to age the Song flows on,
And blends fresh life with glories gone.

5.

A mystery this — but who can see
The soft south wind that sways the tree,
And warms its vital flood to flow,
And wakes its folded buds to blow ? —
Even thus the Power of Music, felt,
The soul is swayed, the heart will melt,
Till Love and Hope so bless the Hours,
Life's dial-plate is marked by flowers.

6.

And every Temple Art has reared
Some truth has taught, some error cleared ;

But only Music's voice leads on
When Time is o'er and Heaven is won;
The Angel-Art to mortals taught —
The golden chord of human thought,
When pure, and tuned by Faith and Love,
Linked with the golden harps above!

THE

PILGRIM OF THE WORLD.

"Vanity of vanities, saith the Preacher; all is vanity."—SOLOMON.

THE world's weary pathway—I've wandered it
through,

Some bright-glancing meteor ever in view;
And fair forms of fancy were beck'ning me on,
But ere I could grasp them the charmers were gone;
And small seems the worth of the joys I've possessed,
Now life's journey is o'er and the Pilgrim must rest.

Men's histories scanned—on the first and last page,
The yearnings of youth, and the anguish of age
Alike are impressed—and what boots it between,
Perchance, in thy record, a triumph has been?
As vain were the efforts that joy to retain,
As imprison the sunbeam or fetter the main.

Beauty and Love — O, their emblems are flowers,
Their date of existence is numbered by hours ;
And Friendship's warm smile with the swallow is
 flown,

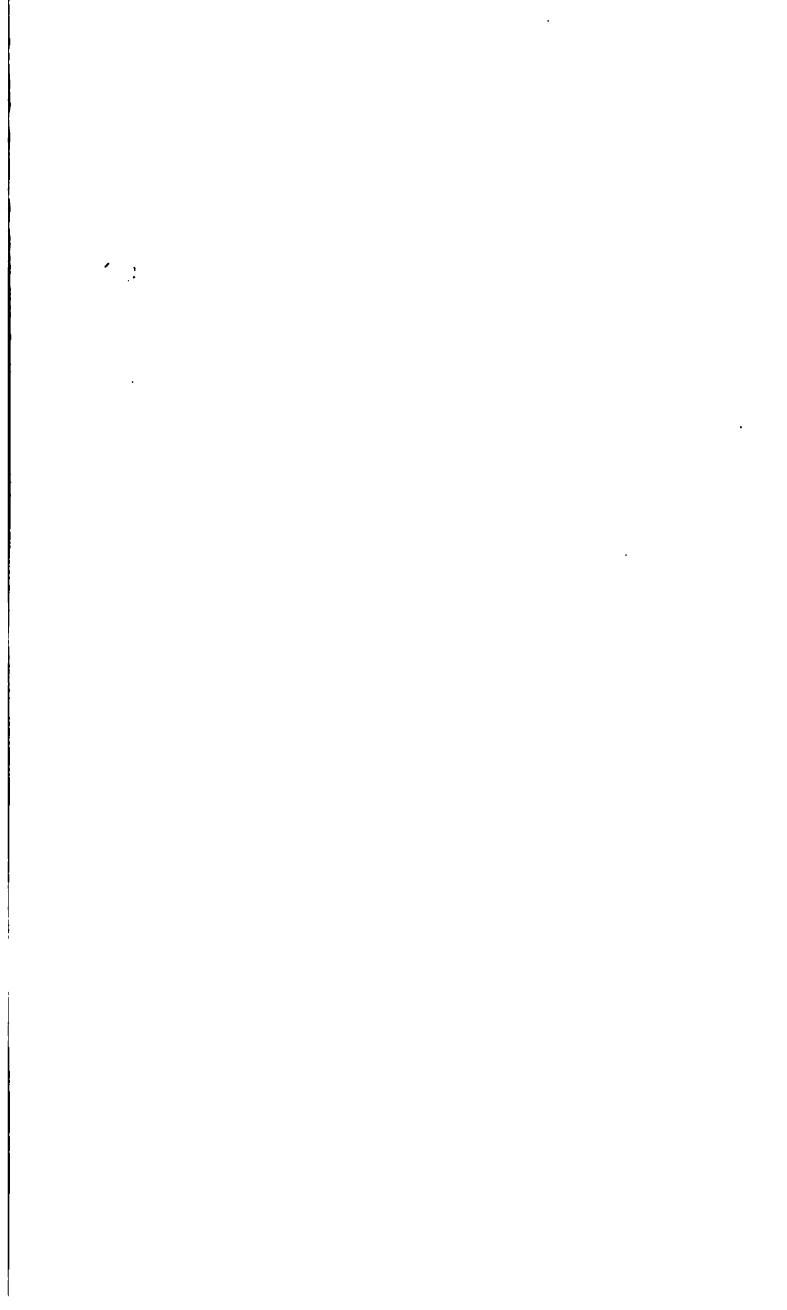
And Fame with the popular breathing is gone,
And Gold in the grasping is dimmed by thy cares,
'T was hope lent it lustre — that hope is thine heir's.

Thus fair as the syren, but false as her song,
The world's painted shadows that lure us along ;
Like the mist on the mountain, the foam on the deep,
Or the voices of friends that we greet in our sleep,
Are the pleasures of earth — and I mourn that to
 heaven

I gave not the heart which to folly was given.

THE END.

ON
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